This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY

OF THE

FOGG ART MUSEUM

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

Digitized by Google

Two thousand and sixty-two copies of this edition—of which two thousand are for sale in England and America—have been printed at the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh, and the type has been distributed.

Digitized by Google

LIBRARY EDITION

THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1905

Digitized by Google

FOGG ART MUSEUM
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Gift of
Mrs. Allston Burr
Jan. 3, 1928.

All rights reserved

Digitized by Google

LIBRARY EDITION

VOLUME XIX

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

AND

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR

WITH OTHER PAPERS AND LECTURES
ON ART AND LITERATURE

1860–1870

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

St. Catherine

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

AND

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR

WITH OTHER PAPERS AND LECTURES
ON ART AND LITERATURE

1860–1870

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1905

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS OF VOLUME XIX

PAGE

List of Illustrations xv

Introduction to this Volume xix

Part I. "Sir Joshua and Holbein" (1860):—

bibliographical note 2

text 3

Part II. "The Study of Architecture in Schools" (1865):—

bibliographical note 18

text 19

report of the discussion after the address 39

Part III. "The Cestus of Aglaia" (1865, 1866):—

bibliographical note 45

contents 47

text 49

Part IV. "The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts," being the Rede Lecture for 1867:—

bibliographical note 162

text 163

Part V. "On the Present State of Modern Art, with Reference to the Advisable Arrangement of a National Gallery" (1867):—

bibliographical note 196

text 197

letter on the British Museum ("Times," January 27, 1866) 229

Digitized by Google

PAGE

PART VI. "FAIRY STORIES": A PREFACE TO "GERMAN POPULAR STORIES" (1868):—

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 232

TEXT 233

PART VII. "THE FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE OF THE VALLEY OF THE SOMME" (1869):—

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 242

TEXT 243

"REFERENCES TO THE SERIES OF PAINTINGS AND SKETCHES FROM MR. RUSKIN'S COLLECTION, SHOWN IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE RELATIONS OF FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE TO CONTEMPORARY AND SUBSEQUENT ART" 269

PART VIII. "THE QUEEN OF THE AIR" (1869):—

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 283

CONTENTS 289

TEXT 291

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS (ADDED IN THIS EDITION) 421

PART IX. "VERONA, AND ITS RIVERS" (1870):—

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 427

TEXT 429

"DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS, ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE ARCHITECTURE OF VERONA, SHOWN AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION, FEB. 4TH, 1870" 449

APPENDIX

REPORTS OF ADDRESSES ON ART (1861–1868)

I. ARCHITECTURE IN FRANCE (1861) 461

II. COMPETITION AND MECHANICAL ART (1865) 465

III. THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL OF ART (1868) 469

Digitized by Google

THE FOLLOWING MINOR RUSKINIANA ARE ALSO INCLUDED IN THIS VOLUME:[1]—

PAGE

EXTRACTS FROM RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO HIS FATHER, 1861, 1862:—
A SUNSET AT BOULOGNE (AUGUST 4, 1861) . . . . . xlii *n.*
LUINI'S FRESCOES IN S. MAURIZIO, MILAN (JUNE 13, 16) . lxxii, lxxiii
RUSKIN'S COPY OF THE ST. CATHERINE (MILAN, JUNE 29, JULY 25; MORNEX, SEPTEMBER 14) lxxiii

LETTER TO THE BROTHERS DALZIEL (GENEVA, AUGUST 12, 1862) . . 149

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NAMES: A LETTER TO HIS FATHER (MORNEX, MARCH 22, 1863) 199

PASSAGES FROM RUSKIN'S DIARY (1867, 1868):—
STUDIES OF BIRDS (JANUARY 1867) xxiii
PLANS OF COTTAGE LIFE (MARCH 14, 1867) xxiv
SORTES BIBLICÆ (1867) xxvi
A DREAM OF THE LAKE OF CONSTANCE (JANUARY 3, 1868) . . xxxvii
LOOKING AND STARING (FEBRUARY 29, NOVEMBER 2, 1868) . xxxviii
THE GRACE OF THE POPLAR (ABBEVILLE, 1868) xxxix
ABBEVILLE AND THE ALPS (AUGUST 30, 1868) xxxix
ST. RIQUIER (AUGUST 27, 1868) xxxix
THE CHAPEL OF RUE (AUGUST 29, 1868) xxxix
TURNER'S ARTISTIC LICENSES (SEPTEMBER 29, 1868) xl
A SHOAL OF SWALLOWS (SEPTEMBER 12, 1868) xl
SUNSET AT ABBEVILLE (SEPTEMBER 22, 1868) xl
A SKY PICTURE (SEPTEMBER 29, 1868) xl
"SINGING TO MYSELF" (SEPTEMBER 18, 1868) xliv
HOUDON'S STATUE OF VOLTAIRE (PARIS, OCTOBER 7, 1868) . . . 251
WORK ON THE UNEMPLOYED COMMITTEE (DECEMBER 1868) . . xliv, xlv

LETTER TO A FRIEND, FORESHADOWING ST. GEORGE'S GUILD (DENMARK HILL, MAY 15, 1867) xxvi

LETTER TO ACLAND ON THE CURATORSHIP OF THE UNIVERSITY GALLERIES (SEPTEMBER 23, 1867) xxxiv

LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER FROM THE LAKE COUNTRY, 1867:—
LL.D. AT CAMBRIDGE (MAY 23) xxvii
THE LAKES AS MEDICINE (LOWWOOD, JUNE 30) xxvii
THE SECRET OF SADNESS (KESWICK, JULY 16) xxvii
THE NORTHERN SKY (BOWNESS, JULY 1) xxviii
A MOUNTAIN WALK (KESWICK, JULY 2) xxix
ST. JOHN'S VALE (KESWICK, JULY 19) xxx
THE CUMBERLAND HILLS (KESWICK, JULY 30) xxxi
A DAY ON SADDLEBACK (KESWICK, JULY 31) xxxi
A DAY ON SKIDDAW (KESWICK, AUGUST 6) xxxii
A DAY AT CONISTON (WINDERMERE, AUGUST 10) xxxiii
AMONG THE LANGDALE PIKES (LANGDALE, AUGUST 13) xxxii

[1] Short extracts from collections of Ruskin's letters (such as those to Professor Norton), which appear *in extenso* in a later volume, are not included in these lists.

Digitized by Google

MINOR RUSKINIANA: *Continued*:—

PAGE

A VACILLATING MOOD: LETTER TO HIS MOTHER (WINNINGTON, MAY 25, 1868) xxii

LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER FROM ABBEVILLE, 1868:—

"MYSELF AGAIN" (AUGUST 25) xxxviii
SUCCESSFUL SKETCHES (SEPTEMBER 1) xli
A "STONES OF ABBEVILLE" (SEPTEMBER 9) xli
HIS TIME-TABLE (SEPTEMBER 7) xli
TALKS WITH A TALLOW-CHANDLER (SEPTEMBER 18, 22) . . xli, xlii
THE PLEASURES OF ABBEVILLE (SEPTEMBER 30) xlii
PLANS FOR THE HERNE HILL HOUSE (SEPTEMBER 30) xlii
HIS ABBEVILLE DRAWINGS (OCTOBER 19) xliii

LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER FROM SWITZERLAND AND ITALY, 1869:—

PLANS FOR REDEEMING THE RHONE VALLEY (BRIEG, MAY 4) . . lv
A RAINBOW WATERFALL (DOMO D'OSSOLA, MAY 5) xlviii
REACTION AFTER THE SIMPLON (BAVENO, MAY 6) xlviii
LUINI'S "ST. CATHERINE" (MILAN, MAY 7) lxxiv
THE TOMBS OF VERONA (MAY 10) xlviii
VERONA AFTER SEVENTEEN YEARS (MAY 11) xlviii
THE MARBLES OF VERONA (MAY 16) xlix
A SUNSET AT VERONA (MAY 21) xlix
TO HARNESS THE RIVER DRAGONS (VERONA, MAY 22) lvi
THE CASTELBARCO TOMB (MAY 25, 26; JULY 23, 25) xlix
THE EDUCATION OF ALPINE TORRENTS (VERONA, JUNE 2) . . . lvi
"A HISTORY TO EVERY FOOT OF GROUND" (VERONA, JUNE 3) . . l
A MEETING WITH LONGFELLOW (VERONA, JUNE 4) liv
HIS TIME-TABLE (VERONA, JUNE 7) l
"AND ONLY MAN IS VILE" (VERONA, JUNE 8) l
J. W. BUNNEY'S WORK AT VERONA (JUNE 10) li
A DRAWING OF THE TOMB OF CAN GRANDE (JUNE 15) li
FROM APOTHECARY'S BOY TO PHYSICIAN (VERONA, JUNE 16) . . xlvii
BEAUTY AND MISERY (VERONA, JUNE 17) lv
WORK AND SONG (VERONA, JUNE 18) lvii
A "STONES OF VERONA" (VERONA, JUNE 21) xlvii
"MY FAVOURITE GRIFFIN" (JUNE 22) li
THE STONES OF S. FERMO (JUNE 25) lii
THE PEACE OF THE FIELDS (VERONA, JUNE 25) lii
MANY-SIDED VERONA (JUNE 28) lii
THE SCALA IRONWORK (JUNE 29) lii
ARS LONGA, VITA BREVIS (VERONA, JUNE 30) liii
WITH HOLMAN HUNT AT VENICE (JULY 1) liv
GEOLOGY, ART, AND ECONOMY (VERONA, JULY 5) liii
MOUNTAINS OR FRESCOES? (VERONA, JULY 6) liii
A STUDY OF A BABY AFTER TINTORET (VENICE, AUGUST 3) . . . liii
THE "STONES OF VENICE" RECONSIDERED (VENICE, AUGUST 7) . . xlvii
HISTORY IN A NAUTILUS SHELL (VENICE, AUGUST 8) . . . liv, lxiv
INUNDATIONS OF THE TICINO (FAIDO, AUGUST 14) lvi

Digitized by Google

MINOR RUSKINIANA: *Continued*:—

PAGE

HIS ELECTION AS PROFESSOR AT OXFORD (LUGANO, AUGUST 14; HOSPENTHAL, AUGUST 15) . . . . . lviii, lix
BOTANICAL PLANS (GIESSBACH, AUGUST 19) lxi
"TOO MANY IRONS IN THE FIRE" (GIESSBACH, AUGUST 21) . . lx
A WALK ABOVE THE GIESSBACH (AUGUST 22) lx
MARIE OF THE GIESSBACH (AUGUST 26) lix

LETTERS FROM CARLYLE:—

TO RUSKIN ON "THE QUEEN OF THE AIR" (CHELSEA, AUGUST 17, 1869) lxx
TO FROUDE ON THE SAME (1869) lviii
TO RUSKIN (CHELSEA, OCTOBER 1, 1869) lviii

REMINISCENCES OF RUSKIN:—

AT KESWICK: BY F. W. H. MYERS (1867) xxxii
AT DENMARK HILL: BY LADY BURNE-JONES xxxvi
A DINNER WITH RUSKIN AND LONGFELLOW: BY C. E. NORTON (1868) . xliii
A MEETING WITH DARWIN: BY C. E. NORTON (1868) xliv
THE TURNERS AT DENMARK HILL: BY CHARLES DARWIN . . . xlv
RUSKIN AND CARLYLE: BY J. A. FROUDE (1869) lvii
AT MILAN: BY E. BURNE-JONES (1862) lxxiv
MISS OCTAVIA HILL'S SCHEMES xxiv

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

St. Catherine, by Luini (*Photogravure from the copy by Ruskin of the fresco at Milan*) . . . *Frontispiece*

IN "SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN"

PLATE

I. The Holy Family, by Sir Joshua Reynolds (*Photogravure from the engraving by W. Sharp*) *To face page* 4

II. Portrait of George Gyzen, by Holbein (*Photogravure from the picture in the Berlin Gallery*) „ „ 10

III. The "Meyer" Madonna, by Holbein (*Photogravure from the picture in the Dresden Gallery*) „ „ 13

IV. St. Barbara and St. Elizabeth, by Holbein (*from the pictures in the Munich Gallery*) . „ „ 14

IN "THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA"

V. The Cannon, by Dürer (*Photogravure*) . . „ „ 113

IN "MODERN ART"

VI. Love leading Alcestis, by Sir Edward Burne-Jones (*Photogravure from the drawing in the Ruskin Drawing School, Oxford*) . . . „ „ 207

VII. The Two Wives of Jason, by Sir Edward Burne-Jones (*Photogravure from the drawing in the Ruskin Drawing School, Oxford*). . „ „ 208

Digitized by Google

IN "FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE"

PLATE

VIII. The Market Place, Abbeville, 1868 (*Photogravure from a drawing by Ruskin*) . *To face page* 244

IX. St. Vulfran, Abbeville, from the East (*Steel-engraving by J. C. Armytage from a drawing by Ruskin*) . . . . . „ „ 246

X. The Doge Andrea Gritti, by Titian (*Photogravure from the picture at Brantwood*) . . „ „ 248

XI. Details from the West Front of St. Vulfran, Abbeville (*Photogravure from a drawing by Ruskin*) . . . . . „ „ 252

XII. The Southern Porch of St. Vulfran, Abbeville (*Photogravure from a drawing by Ruskin*) „ „ 254

XIII. The West Front of Rouen Cathedral (*from a photograph by Arthur Burgess*) . . . „ „ 266

IN "THE QUEEN OF THE AIR"

XIV. Athena (*Photogravure from a statue from Herculaneum*) . . . . . „ „ 306

XV. The Delphic Apollo (*Wood-engraving by H. Uhlrich from a Greek vase*) . . . „ „ 338

XVI. The Chariot of Apollo; and Athena with Hermes (*Wood-engraving by H. Uhlrich from a Greek vase*) . . . . . „ „ 340

XVII. Erba della Madonna (*Photogravure from a drawing by Ruskin*) . . . . . „ „ 377

XVIII. The Hercules of Camarina and other Greek Coins (*Photogravure from impressions*) . . „ „ 410

IN "VERONA, AND ITS RIVERS"

(*From Drawings by the Author*) .

XIX. Niche on the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona (*Chromo-lithograph*) . . . . . „ „ 429

XX. The Market Place, Verona: 1841 (*Photogravure*) „ „ 432

Digitized by Google

PLATE
XXI. Study of a Capital, Verona (*Photogravure*) *To face page* 434
XXII. Upper Part of the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona (*Photogravure*) . . . . . „ „ 440
XXIII. Tomb of Can Grande, Verona: 1869 (*Photogravure*) . . . . . „ „ 441
XXIV. Details from the Same: 1869 (*Photogravure*) . „ „ 442
XXV. The Castelbarco Tomb, Verona: 1835 (*Photogravure*) . . . . . „ „ 451
XXVI. The Piazza de' Signori, Verona: 1869 (*Photogravure*). . . . . „ „ 457

FACSIMILES

A Page of the MS. of "Sir Joshua and Holbein" (§§ 15, 16) . . . . . *Between pages* 16, 17
A Page of the MS. of "The Cestus of Aglaia" (§ 22) . . . . . *To face page* 72
A Page of the MS. of "The Queen of the Air" (§ 3) . . . . . „ „ 297

Note.—Of the drawings reproduced in this volume, six have appeared before. No. VIII. was reproduced by autotype process as Plate I. in the large-paper edition of E. T. Cook's *Studies in Ruskin*; and, by half-tone process, in the *Magazine of Art*, April 1900. No. XIX. was Plate I. (chromolithograph) in *Verona and Other Lectures* (1894). No. XXI. was Plate X. in the same book, and No. XXII. was Plate VI. The two subjects included in No. XXIV. were Plates VII. and VIII. in the same book, and No. XXV. was Plate V.

Of the drawings, those of the *frontispiece* and of Plates VI. and VII. are permanently exhibited on the walls of the Ruskin Drawing School, Oxford, while others are in the cabinets of the same collection. That of Plate VIII. was shown at the Ruskin Exhibition at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, 1901 (No. 6), and at the Ruskin Exhibition, Manchester, 1904 (No. 306); that of Plate XII. was No. 216 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, and No. 437 in the Bradford Exhibition of 1904; that of Plate XIX. was No. 232 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, No. 313 at Manchester, and No. 172 in the Coniston Exhibition of 1900; that of Plate XX. was No. 439 at Bradford; that of Plate XXI. (in the collection of Mr. T. F. Taylor) was No. 312 at Manchester; that of Plate XXII. was No. 116 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours; of those in Plate XXIV., the Madonna (in the collection of Mr. T. F. Taylor) was No. 316 at Manchester, and the Can Grande was No. 264 at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XIX

THIS is a volume of miscellanies, collecting the papers and a book written by Ruskin on artistic and literary subjects between 1865 and 1869, together with one paper of an earlier date. It contains three lectures of considerable interest which have not hitherto been published, and presents in a complete form a series of papers on the laws of art, hitherto so attainable only in the back numbers of a periodical.

The contents of the volume, which are arranged chronologically, are as follow:—

I. A paper on *Sir Joshua and Holbein*, which originally appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* for March 1860.—This is a chapter which was crowded out from the last volume of *Modern Painters*, and recalls in style and treatment the chapters in that volume which contrast Dürer and Salvator, Wouvermans and Angelico, or Rubens and Paul Veronese. If the reader will compare § 15 of this paper (p. 12) with the chapter in *Modern Painters* describing the difference in the outlook of Dürer and Holbein on the one side, and of Salvator on the other,[1] he will see at once that the passage upon Holbein must have been written at the same time and with the same ideas in the author's mind.

II. A paper on *The Study of Architecture in Schools*, read to the Royal Institute of British Architects on May 15, 1865.—Into this paper Ruskin compressed much that was most deeply felt in his theory of the place of the fine arts in human life, and the discussion which followed the reading of his paper shows the strong impression which it made at the time. "The French word *ébloui*," said one of the speakers, "was the only term which could adequately define the mixed state of surprise, delight, and general acute excitement in which the fiery essay had left him. Within the compass of a brief discourse the accomplished lecturer had handled nearly the whole scope of human philosophy, as well as of the art which it was their privilege to practise, tracing, as far as practicable, the infinite ramifications which he supposed to connect the material elements of the successful practice

[1] Part ix. ch. iv. § 4 (Vol. VII. p. 302).

Digitized by Google

of architecture with our moral natures."[1] The speaker rightly characterised the paper in noting its fiery energy and width of range; it was characteristic also in its confession of the speaker's divided counsels—continuing his pursuit of the beautiful, and yet half "seceding from the study of all art." In this respect the paper is typical, as we have already seen and shall again see presently, of Ruskin's temper at the time. The incidental references in the paper to the characteristics of Greek art, and notices of Greek coins, connect it also with other pages in the present volume.

III. *The Cestus of Aglaia*, being nine papers on the Laws of Art, with especial reference to engraving, which originally appeared in the *Art Journal* during 1865 and 1866.—Passages from these papers were afterwards incorporated by Ruskin in other books, and such passages were omitted from *The Cestus of Aglaia* when the papers were reprinted in *On the Old Road* (1885). In this edition of his writings, which is complete and chronological, it has seemed better to reprint the papers in their entirety, referring back to them in the later books. *The Cestus of Aglaia* is thus for the first time here printed in a complete and collected form; and it is accordingly furnished with a title-page and list of contents (pp. 43, 47). The papers are very characteristic, as the author himself said,[2] of one of his manners of writing; and some further remarks upon them are given lower down in this Introduction (p. lxiv.).

IV. *The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts*, a lecture delivered on Sir Robert Rede's foundation to the University of Cambridge on May 24, 1867.—This lecture, here printed from the author's MS., has not hitherto been published. The significance of it in subject is touched upon lower down (p. xxiii.); in style, it shows the note of academical state, of courtly elaboration, which was often heard in the Professor's lectures at Oxford.

V. *On the Present State of Modern Art, with Reference to the Advisable Arrangement of the National Gallery*, a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution on June 7, 1867.—This lecture also, here printed from the author's MS., has not hitherto been published, though Ruskin (as we know from a passage in *Time and Tide*[3]) had intended to include it in his Works. The practical suggestions with which it concludes were directed to purposes which he had closely at heart,

[1] The speaker was Mr. Digby Wyatt: see *Sessional Papers of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1864–1865, p. 152.
[2] *Queen of the Air*, § 134 (below, p. 408).
[3] See Vol. XVII. p. 469.

Digitized by Google

and which foreshadowed in a remarkable way some things afterwards accomplished. In reading his suggestions for People's Palaces (§§ 25, 26), we may remember that Sir Walter Besant's *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*—the story from which the People's Palace in the Mile End Road was to spring—did not appear till fifteen years later (1882). Ruskin's suggestions of a Standard Series of art specimens (§ 29) and of a Standard Library (§ 28) were in some measure carried out by himself in his Art Collection at Oxford and in his *Bibliotheca Pastorum*. His plea for Municipal Art Galleries (§ 29) was delivered at a time when few such institutions as yet existed. Whether Ruskin would altogether have approved of the Tate Gallery may be doubted, but it is worth noting that he advocated the building of a new National Gallery on the Millbank site (§ 37). Ruskin's views on the proper co-ordination of museums and galleries—his distinction between popular and educational collections and treasure-houses of what is rich and rare — are well worth attention to-day. He returned to the subject thirteen years later in a series of letters in the *Art Journal* on "A Museum or Picture Gallery: its Functions and its Formation," and in the St. George's Museum at Sheffield he was able, on a small scale, to give an object-lesson in what he meant.

VI. *Fairy Stories*, an Introduction (written in 1868) to a re-issue of the English translation of the *Märchen* of the Brothers Grimm with Cruikshank's illustrations.—A letter written in 1883 after one of his illnesses, in which Ruskin fears that he "can never more write things rich in thought like the preface to *Grimm*,"[2] indicates the importance which he attached to this piece. Its relation to Cruikshank, and its remarks on the historical significance of mythology, connect it with other pages in the present volume.

VII. *The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme*, a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution on January 29, 1869.—This is a third lecture which has not hitherto been published. It is here printed from the author's MS.[3] The lecture is one of the most charming, as also perhaps one of the least discursive and most closely knit, of Ruskin's occasional discourses. Had he been able to complete his scheme for *Our Fathers have Told Us*, it is probable that he would

[1] These are reprinted in a later volume.

[2] See the letter to F. S. Ellis of June 11, 1883; at p. 66 of the privately issued *Stray Letters from Professor Ruskin to a London Bibliopole* (1892), reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

[3] It appears that Ruskin had some idea of publishing it at the time, for the readers of the *Art Journal*, 1869, p. 95, were told of "an expectation that the lecture may appear entire in our pages."

Digitized by Google

have used the lecture in the eighth part of that work, which was to be given to "the Cathedral of Rouen and the schools of architecture which it represents;[1] for Abbeville," he says elsewhere,[2] "is the preface and interpretation of Rouen." Abbeville was one of the towns to which Ruskin was most attached, and it was after a long sojourn there in 1868 that the lecture was written. He took immense pains with it, and put together an Exhibition of Fifty Paintings and Sketches to illustrate it. The Catalogue of this Exhibition is here reprinted as an appendix to the lecture (pp. 269–277); and several of Ruskin's drawings, as well as some other illustrations, are included among the plates (see below, pp. lxxv., lxxvi.).

VIII. *The Queen of the Air* (1869).—This well-known book is discussed below (pp. lxv.–lxxi.).

IX. *Verona and its Rivers*, a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution on February 5, 1870.—This lecture, written similarly after a long sojourn at Verona in 1869, is here reprinted from the volume entitled *Verona and Other Lectures*, issued in 1895. For it, as for the Abbeville lecture, Ruskin prepared an Exhibition of Fifty Drawings and Photographs; and here, again, the Catalogue is reprinted as an appendix to the lecture (pp. 449–458), and several of the illustrations are given (see pp. lxxviii., lxxix.).

Finally, in an appendix to the volume, reports are given of some minor lectures on artistic subjects (1861, 1865, 1868).

1867–1869

The writings and discourses, thus included in the present volume, comprise, as we have seen in the introduction to the preceding volume, only one side of Ruskin's work during the years in question. A passage in a letter to his mother, written from Winnington on May 25, 1868, well describes his divided allegiance:—

> "My writing is so entirely at present the picture of my mind that it seems to me as if the one must be as inscrutable as the other. For indeed I am quite unable from any present crises to judge of what is best for me to do. There is so much misery and error in the world which I see I could have immense power to set various human influences against, by giving up my science and art, and

[1] See the "General Plan of *Our Fathers have Told Us*" given in the volume containing *The Bible of Amiens*.
[2] *Præterita*, i. § 180.

Digitized by Google

wholly trying to teach peace and justice; and yet my own gifts seem so specially directed towards quiet investigation of beautiful things that I cannot make up my mind, and my writing is as vacillating as my temper."

The working compromise at which Ruskin arrived has already been indicated (Vol. XVIII., p. xx.). More and more he connected his art-teaching with moral, and even political, injunctions; in this respect the Rede Lecture is especially characteristic.

Having in the preceding Introduction traced his movements during the years 1864–1866, we now proceed to follow the outer tenor of his life and the developments of his temper during 1867, 1868, and 1869.

Ruskin's principal work in the early part of 1867 was the letters to Thomas Dixon, published later in the year as *Time and Tide* (Vol. XVII.). They were, as he says, desultory, and were written without any extreme care, for he was in a state of health which admitted of no intense concentration. His diary indicates various morbid conditions; he records many weird dreams, and notes that he sees "floating sparks in his eyes"; but it was in the life of the affections that he was most suffering.[1] Alternations of disappointment and hope, chagrin, anxiety, and the weariness of waiting—these were the causes of the despondency, sleeplessness, and nervous prostration from which he often suffered, and which caused him to write to a young artist friend, to whom at this time he opened his heart, that he was "dying slowly." Ruskin, more even than most men of wayward genius, coloured his writings with his moods, and readers of the letters to Dixon in a previous volume will already have noted in them many a sign of irritability and gloom. He found relief in drawing, and several of the studies of birds and shells which now form part of the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford were done in the early part of 1867. Some extracts from his diary record the progress of his studies in this sort, and show how much pains he took with them:—

"1867. *Jan.* 17.—Painting pheasant—large: a singularly good and bright day.

"*Jan.* 18.—Finished pheasant satisfactorily, though day foggy.

"*Jan.* 20.—Got on with partridge.

"*Jan.* 21.—Finished partridge; three birds in a week. I began smallest pheasant on Tuesday last; on Wednesday finished it and began the large one. Thursday and Friday, worked hard at large

[1] References to this thread in Ruskin's life occur on pp. xxxviii., lix.; the story is already partly familiar to readers of *Præterita* (iii. ch. iii.).

Digitized by Google

one. Saturday, finished it (all but done on Friday), and began partridge; yesterday worked hard and to-day harder and finished it: the best of the three.

"*Jan.* 22.—Hard to work again on my partridge's bill to-day, but got it right.

"*Jan.* 23.—Got a bit of snipe nicely done.

"*Jan.* 24.—Finished snipe all but wing.

"*Jan.* 25.—Bettered my snipe's wing.

"*Jan.* 26.—Angry in morning and unhappy all day, but painted teal's head wonderfully.

"*Jan.* 28.—Worked hard at teal in morning.

"*Jan.* 29.—Finished teal, successfully."

A study of a wild duck, probably the finest of Ruskin's drawings of birds, is now included in the collections of the British Museum.[1] Reproductions of it and of some similar studies will be found in later volumes.

He was busy too, at this time, with schemes of practical benevolence. "Plan cottage life," he notes in his diary (March 14), "and help to poor, if spared; Joanna very happy about it." Other entries record visits from Miss Octavia Hill, doubtless on the business of his housing schemes, to which reference has already been made.[2] These schemes which Miss Hill originated with Ruskin's help have borne fruit in the reclamation of some of the worst areas in London.

"They aroused public opinion," writes a friend of their author,[3] "stimulated legislation, and turned the attention of philanthropists and capitalists in the direction of providing civilised dwellings for the poor. Miss Hill's recommendations and methods have spread to most of the cities and crowded towns of Great Britain, and have been adopted in America and in many European countries. . . . The 'grain of mustard seed,' from which the sturdy plant of housing reform sprang, was first planted in Ruskin's house at Denmark Hill. One day he and Miss Octavia Hill were having a friendly chat, and he lamented the dreariness of life without an object other than the usual daily round. 'I paint, take my mother for a drive, dine with friends or answer these correspondents,' said Mr. Ruskin, drawing a heap of letters from his pocket with a rueful face, 'but one longs to do something more satisfying.' 'Most of us feel like that at times,' said his visitor. 'Well, what would you like to be doing?' asked Ruskin.

[1] It was "B. 295" in *Guide to an Exhibition of Drawings and Sketches by Old Masters and Deceased Masters of the English School*, 1901.

[2] See *Time and Tide*, § 148 (Vol. XVII. p. 437).

[3] Sarah A. Tooley in the *Daily Chronicle*, July 24, 1905.

Digitized by Google

'Something to provide better homes for the poor,' was Miss Octavia Hill's quick reply. The idea seemed to strike Ruskin, and, turning sharp round in his seat, he asked: 'How could it be done? Have you a business plan?'

"Miss Hill was only a girl at the time, but was impressed by Mr. Ruskin's desire that the scheme should pay. He said if she could make it do so the work would spread. After further consideration, Mr. Ruskin provided the working capital, and Miss Hill became the happy landlady of three dirty and neglected houses, in the neighbourhood of her own home, in the Marylebone Road. . . . Personal management was the keynote then as it is now of Miss Hill's work, and from the first she collected the rents herself and made friends with her tenants. I have heard Miss Hill describe how, in those early days, she climbed dark stairways covered with every kind of dirt and abomination, and grasped her rent-bag tightly when in the darkness some evil-looking face suddenly appeared. But never once was she robbed or insulted. The people trusted her from the first, and when they learned that almsgiving was not a part of her scheme, and that no arrears of rent were allowed, began to take a pride in cultivating self-respect and independence. Money was spent to make the houses decently habitable, overcrowding was discouraged by letting two-roomed tenements for little more than had been charged for one room, but the net profits on the property were not reduced because no arrears were allowed. The financial result was that at the end of a year and a half the scheme had paid five per cent. revenue, and had repaid £48 of the capital. Miss Hill's labour was gratuitous, but she put aside the percentage which a collector would have charged and devoted it to beneficent purposes. Mr. Ruskin's faith in her was amply justified, and under his advice and encouragement Miss Hill took an increasing number of courts under her management, and so her work grew."

Ruskin referred to Miss Hill's labours in one of his public lectures of this year (see p. 213, below).

He saw much, during these months, of Carlyle, Froude, and Helps; the gentle wisdom of the author of *Friends in Council* was perhaps more helpful to his mood than the stimulus, through thunder and lightning, of Carlyle. How strongly Helps sympathised with Ruskin's social aims, how greatly he admired the devotion which inspired them, is shown in the dedication of *Conversations on War and Culture*.[1] A letter of a somewhat later date in this same year (1867) shows the germ in Ruskin's mind of those practical efforts towards social regeneration which were presently to take shape in *Fors Clavigera* and "St. George's

[1] Now given in a note to *The Eagle's Nest*, § 208 (Vol. XXI.).

Digitized by Google

Guild." It was written to a Yorkshire correspondent and friend, who desires to remain anonymous:—

"DENMARK HILL, S., *15th May*, '67.

"It was very nice of you to wait till I had done with those letters, though I can't even yet write for a little while, for I have two most troublesome lectures to write, one for Cambridge and one for London;[1] but I shall be nearly free by the 7th of next month, I hope. . . .

"I am very glad of your letter, in all ways. Do you know, I think the end of it will be that any of us who have yet hearts sound enough must verily and in deed draw together and initiate a true and wholesome way of life, in defiance of the world,[2] and with laws which we will vow to obey, and endeavour to make others, by our example, accept. I think it must come to this, but accidents of my own life have prevented me until lately from being able to give to such a plan any practical hope; but now I might, with some help, be led on to its organization. Would you join it, and vow to keep justice and judgment and the peace of God on this earth?

"Ever affectionately yours,

"J. RUSKIN."

For inner consolation, meanwhile, in hours of suffering and anxiety Ruskin turned, as his diary shows, to the Bible. He tried, daily for some months, to cast his horoscope, and to be guided and strengthened, by *Sortes Biblicæ*. Thus on May 15 we read, "Open at 'Behold, we have left all and followed thee'"; on May 19, "Open in evening at 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life'"; and on August 14, "'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, wherefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness'"; and again, on the same day, "Opened at Isaiah xxxiii. 17: 'Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.' My old Bible often *does* open there, but it was a happy first reading." Other entries here follow (as in some other similar pages of the diary), which seem to show that he enumerated methodically such good things as befell him, in accord with his Bible readings:—

"By Grasmere and St. John's Vale to Keswick. (*a*) Met poor woman at Wythburn and helped her. (*b*) Crossed my forehead three times with the waters of the spring at St. John's Chapel.

[1] The lectures here printed, pp. 163–229.

[2] In a later letter to the same correspondent (May 21) Ruskin qualifies these words thus: "I do not in the least propose any onslaught on public opinion or custom in any violent way; but only, the observance of certain laws which may be seen to be exemplary in their working."

Digitized by Google

(*c*) Conquered petty anxiety; forded brook, and found good of it. (*d*) Drank healths after dinner—seven. (*e*) Out on lake in evening. Fell asleep in boat near St. Herbert's. Glorious sky of *broken* white silvery jagged-edged clouds."

This last entry has taken us forward to Ruskin's summer holiday. In May he had given the Rede Lecture at Cambridge (pp. 163–194), and received there an honorary degree. He writes a pleasant account of the ceremony to his mother (May 23), knowing how much it would please her, and signs it "Ever, my dearest mother, your most affectionate son, J. Ruskin, LL.D." He notes the Public Orator's "Latin laudatory speech (recommendatory of you for the honour of degree), some ten or fifteen minutes long; in my case, there being nothing particular to rehearse, except that I had written books 'exquisite in language and faultlessly pure in contention with evil principles.'" The orator, he adds, "dwelt more on *The Crown of Wild Olive* than on any other of my books, which pleased me, as it was the last." Then, a fortnight later, he had a lecture to deliver at the Royal Institution (pp. 197–229). Both lectures were successful, but such exercises were hardly to be commended as tonics for overwrought nerves; so he determined, after a visit to Osborne Gordon at Easthampstead Rectory, in Berkshire, to seek rest and refreshment, if such might be, in the English lakeland which had given him so many happy days in his boyhood, and which was to be the home of his later years.[1] At first the contrast between old times and new—between the recollections of the unclouded home of childhood and the burden and the mystery of later knowledge and suffering, and the sight, moreover, of new hotels and fouled streams—saddened him, as letters to his mother show:—

"LOWWOOD, WINDERMERE, *Sunday morning, June* 30.—It is all very painful and saddening to me. But I am absolutely in want of fresh air and idleness, and *must* take them as a nasty medicine, though I would incomparably rather be working amongst the camphor and ambergris of insects and mummies in the British Museum, and deciphering wing-scales and hieroglyphics, if I could, or working all day long in my own mineral room. But I cannot, and must walk and strive to banish sad thoughts as best I can. I feel a *little* bettering in strength, already."

"I have the secret," he writes to his mother later (July 16), "of extracting sadness from all things, instead of joy, which is no enviable

[1] His itinerary was as follows: Greta Bridge (June 28), Lowwood (June 30), Bowness (July 1), Huntley Burn (July 2), Keswick (July 4), Carlisle (July 10), Wigtown (July 11), Keswick (July 16), Waterhead, on Windermere (August 7), Keswick (August 15), Matlock (August 23), Denmark Hill (August 24).

Digitized by Google

talisman. Forgive me if I ever write in a way that may pain you. It is best that you should know, when I write cheerfully, it is no pretended cheerfulness; so when I am sad, I think it right to confess it."[1]

"CROWN HOTEL, BOWNESS,
"*Monday morning, 1st July, '67.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—Lowwood was too noisy and fashionable (Manchester fashion) for me, so I drove over here yesterday, and got a lovely little corner-parlour in, I believe, your old Inn, though I am confused about it, the view seeming to me so much more beautiful than it did then. But the change in myself, and in all things connected with me, is so great and so sorrowful to me that I can hardly bear the places. It is very different—having you laid up at home, and my father dead, and myself old and ill—from running about the hills, with both of you expecting me home to tea, and I myself as lithe as a stag. I would give anything to be back at home at work on my minerals. But I have no doubt the fresh air and exercise are not only good for me, but vitally necessary just now, so I must endure my rest and liberty with patience. I had a pleasant row across the lake last night, and it is all very lovely. I went up and examined Mr. Richmond's estate before dinner, the father and son (of the farm) showing me everything with great courtesy and niceness. It is very beautiful, but the railroad station, not a mile distant, is a fatal eyesore. If Mr. Richmond builds the house at all for me, my principal study room must be at the back, looking *up* to the rocks and the wild roses (very lovely, both, just now), and only the company room looking to the great view—a very noble one, *but* for the railroad, and having the advantage of endless study of magnificent sunset. I am much struck by the fiery purity and power of the *northern* sky. Last night it was more like an Aurora Borealis than mere sunset; the fire seemed *in* the clouds, and there is hardly any night. It is twilight till eleven, and clear dawn at two (as I know—to my discomfort when sleepless). I hope to reach Huntley Burn about 5 o'clock to-day. I leave this note behind me here, to be sure of post.

"Ever, my dearest mother,
"Your most affectionate Son,
"J. RUSKIN.

"I will send you an envelope from Huntley Burn. I can't to-day, because I don't know if I shall choose to stay longer than a day there (supposing they ask me), it depends so much on their ways."

[1] This extract is reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 242 (1900 ed.), where it is incorporated in a letter of July 19.

Digitized by Google

It will be noticed in this letter that Ruskin already had some vague idea of settling in the Lake Country. After a few days on Windermere, Ruskin went to pay his visit to Lady Henry Kerr at Huntley Burn, on the Scottish Border, close to Abbotsford. He enjoyed the company of his hosts, and recollections of it came back to him in after years. "Will you forgive my connecting the personal memory," he said in one of his last Oxford lectures, "of having once had a wild rose gathered for me, in the glen of Thomas the Rhymer, by the daughter of one of the few remaining Catholic houses of Scotland, with the pleasure I have in reading to you this following true account of the origin of the name of St. Cuthbert's birthplace;—the rather because I owe it to friendship of the same date, with Mr. Cockburn Muir, of Melrose?"[1] But Ruskin found the routine of a visit tiresome, and soon returned to solitude. The hills and moors brought him increase of strength:—

"KESWICK, *2nd July*, 1867.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I have your nice line of yesterday. . . . The letter from Mr. Brown of Venice[2] contained nothing particular, but he is quite well.

"I had a really fine walk yesterday, discovering two pieces of mountain scenery hitherto unknown to me, and very truly noble—buttress of rock on the flanks of Grasmere, between this lake and Crummock water, which may compare not disadvantageously with many pieces of Swiss scenery. I was delighted to find them, as it is always good to have a motive for one's walks, and I shall want to see these on all sides. The weather was delightful—though sudden and mysterious blasts of wind came up through the gorges, the *tops* of the hills were all in perfect repose. I had rather a severe walk of five hours, without stopping more than twenty minutes in all (I never drew bridle once, from here to Grasmere top—five miles, and 2800 feet up), and came in very fresh and frightfully hungry, so I must certainly be gaining strength.

"Your letter to-day is very prettily written, so you are certainly not *losing* it.

"Ever, my dearest mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN.

"I take some pains with my writing, but am always shocked to look at it afterwards. I had a botanist breakfasting with me to-day who wrote a most beautiful hand, but he was one lump of pleasant active egotism — utterly *in*sensitive, and I fancy my broken hand comes partly of sensitiveness, which I should be sorry to lose."

[1] *Pleasures of England*, § 66.
[2] Rawdon Brown: see below, p. liv.

Digitized by Google

There are frequent apologies in the letters to his mother, now and earlier, for bad handwriting. She was somewhat of a precisian in all things, and doubtless told John to mind his *ps* and *qs*; at the present time, too, her sight was failing. She could never quite realise, moreover, that her boy was grown up, and she wrote to him on this occasion, "hoping that he always had some one with him on his mountain rambles." Ruskin next went for a few days on a visit to Miss Agnew's home at Wigtown, where she was now taking a brief holiday. Shortly afterwards she returned to Denmark Hill, and Ruskin used to send, to amuse her, the familiar "rhymed travelling letters," of which he has printed a specimen or two in *Præterita*.[1] He himself returned again to Keswick, moving from the Royal Oak Inn in the town to the old Derwentwater Hotel on the margin of the lake:—

"KESWICK, *19th July*, '67.
"*Afternoon—half-past three.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—As this is the last post before Sunday, I send one more line to say I've had a delightful forenoon's walk—since half-past ten, by St. John's Vale—and had pleasant thoughts, and found one of the most variedly beautiful torrent beds I ever saw in my life, and I feel that I gain strength, slowly but certainly, every day; the great good of the place is that I can be content without going on great excursions which fatigue and do me harm (or else worry me with problems). I am *content* here with the roadside hedges and streams, and this contentment is the great thing for health; and there is hardly anything to annoy me of absurd or calamitous human doing, but still the ancient cottage life—very rude, and miserable enough in its torpor—but clean and calm, not a vile cholera and plague of bestirred pollution, like back streets of London. There is also much more real and deep beauty than I expected to find, in some of the minor pieces of scenery and in the cloud effects. . . .

"Ever, my dearest Mother,
"Your most affectionate Son,
"J. RUSKIN.

"But please don't say where I am to anybody. I like to be utterly *free*—to be able to get off anywhere at any moment."[2]

Ruskin had his servant Crawley with him on this tour, and he now sent for Downs, the gardener at Denmark Hill, in order to give him

[1] See i. § 163 (where in the current editions "1857" should be corrected to "1867").
[2] Reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 242 (1900 edition).

Digitized by Google

also a glimpse of the Lake Country. His mother's hope was often realised, for on many of the walks described in later letters, Ruskin was attended by Downs "hunting up ferns" and Crawley "carrying my rock specimens" (August 11). It was characteristic of Ruskin that many of his movements were arranged in order to show Downs this, and enable Downs to do that. It was characteristic also that, before starting on his own holiday, he had sent his assistants, Mr. George Allen and Mr. William Ward, on a sketching and walking tour in the Meuse country.[1] Letters to his mother describe many of his own rambles:[2]—

> "(*July* 30.)—Downs arrived yesterday quite comfortable and in fine weather. It is not bad this morning, and I hope to take him for a walk up Saddleback, which, after all, is the finest to my mind of all the Cumberland hills—though that is not saying much, for they are much lower in effect, in proportion to their real height, than I had expected. The beauty of the country is in its quiet roadside bits, and rusticity of cottage life and shepherd labour—its mountains are sorrowfully melted away from my old dreams of them."
>
> "KESWICK, *July* 31.—The weather is really very endurable now, and to be commended, for Cumberland; it was shady and clear yesterday, without rain, and I did what I had long had it in my mind to do, went straight up the steep front of Saddleback by the central ridge to the summit. It is the finest thing I've yet seen, there being several bits of real crag-work, and a fine view at the top over the great plains of Penrith on one side, and the Cumberland hills as a chain on the other. Fine fresh wind blowing and plenty of crows. Do you remember poor papa's favourite story about the Quaker whom the crows ate on Saddleback? There were some of the biggest and hoarsest voiced ones about the cliff that I've ever had sympathetic croaks from, and one on the top, or near it, so big, that Downs and Crawley, having Austrian tendencies in politics[3] took it for a 'black eagle.' Downs went up capitally, though I couldn't get him down again, because he *would* stop to gather ferns. However, we did it all, and came down to Threlkeld—of the Bridal of Triermain—
>
> "'The King his way pursued
> By lonely Threlkeld's waste and wood'—
>
> in good time for me to dress, and, for a wonder, go out to dinner

[1] See the *Letters to William Ward*, vol. i. pp. 73 *seq.*; privately issued in 1893, and reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

[2] The letters of July 30 and 31 are reprinted from Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 243.

[3] See Vol. XVIII. pp. 538–539.

Digitized by Google

with Acland's friends the Butlers—chiefly to meet a young Scotchman[1]—whom I will tell you about in Joanna's letter as this is enough for you to read to-day."

"KESWICK, *August* 6.—I wished old times could come back again, on Skiddaw top to-day. Nothing in the world is so entirely unchanged in aspect as these hilltops—and the five-and-thirty years are there 'as a mist that rolls away.'[2] But I am really thankful to find myself so strong of limb again in the course of only a month's practice. I went up in two hours, and was coming down in cheerful speed, in the condition which, if I were a horse, would be described as 'without a hair turned,' when I met a strong-looking man in a guide's charge panting for breath. He asked me 'if I had such a thing as a drop of brandy, for he had forgotten to bring any up.' I told him 'it was not the least cold at the top, and he could rest there as long as he liked—and he would be much better with no brandy.' He was superfluous enough to thank me for this not very expensive consolation. But Crawley says it turned cold at the top very soon after I left it, so I hope the poor man got his brandy from somebody else."

It must have been after one of these mountain rambles that Frederic Myers, then a young man of twenty-four, first saw Ruskin. "I met him first," says Myers, "in my own earliest home, beneath the spurs of Skiddaw—its long slopes 'bronzed with deepest radiance,' as the boy Wordsworth had seen them long since in even such an evening's glow. Since early morning Ruskin had lain and wandered in the folds and hollows of the hill; and he came back, grave as from a solemn service, from 'day-long gazing on the heather and the blue.'"[3] In a letter to his mother, Ruskin himself describes such a day of solemn service and gazing:—

"LANGDALE, 13*th August* 1867. *Evening.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—It is perfectly calm to-night, not painfully hot, and the full moon shining over the mountains, opposite my window, which are the scene of Wordsworth's *Excursion*. It

[1] Perhaps Mr. Cockburn Muir, referred to above, p. xxix.

[2] Tennyson: "In the Valley of Cauteretz":—

"All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two-and-thirty years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two-and-thirty years were a mist that rolls away."

[3] *Fragments of Prose and Poetry*, by Frederic W. H. Myers, 1904, p. 90. Myers' father was incumbent of St. John's, Keswick. Myers was often to meet Ruskin in later years at Broadlands, and his psychical researches had much of Ruskin's sympathy.

Digitized by Google

was terribly hot in the earlier day, and I did not leave the house till five o'clock, then I went out, and in the heart of Langdale Pikes found the loveliest rock-scenery (chased with silver waterfalls) that I ever set foot or heart upon. The Swiss torrent beds are always more or less savage and ruinous, with a terrible sense of overflowing strength and danger lulled. But here, the sweet heather and ferns and stone mosses nestled in close to the cool dashing of the narrow streams; while every cranny of crag held its own little placid lake of amber, trembling with falling drops, but quietly trembling, not troubled into ridgy wave or foam, the rocks themselves —ideal rock as hard as iron—no, not quite that, but *so* hard that, after breaking some of it, breaking solid white quartz seemed like smashing brittle sugar-loaf in comparison—and cloven into the most noble masses, not grotesque, but majestic and full of harmony with the larger mountain mass of which they formed a part. Fancy what a place! for a hot afternoon after five, with no wind and absolute solitude—no creature, except a lamb or two, to mix any ruder sound or voice with the plash of the innumerable streamlets. I stayed up there so long that it's bed-time now—after writing Joan's letter—and I won't sit up; that is one great reason for my being better—that I'm always early in bed. To-morrow I leave early for Keswick, but shall probably go up Helvellyn again on the way. I leave these letters behind me, for surety of arrival.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. Ruskin."[1]

Another letter is of interest as recording a visit to Coniston, which was afterwards to be his home:—

"I was at Coniston to-day," he writes (August 10). "Our old Waterhead Inn, where I was so happy playing in the boats, *exists* no more. Its place is grown over with smooth park grass—the very site of it forgotten!—and, a quarter of a mile down the lake, a vast hotel built in the railroad station style, making up, I suppose, its fifty or eighty beds, with coffee-room, smoking-room, and every pestilent and devilish Yankeeism that money can buy, or speculation plan.

"The depression, whatever its cause, does not affect my strength. I walked up a long hill on the road to Coniston to-day (gathering wild raspberries); then from this new Inn two miles, to the foot of Coniston Old Man; up it, down again (necessarily!), and back to dinner—without so much as warming myself—not that there was much danger of doing that at the top, for a keen west wind was

[1] This letter and the one next following are reprinted from Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, pp. 245, 244.

Digitized by Google

blowing drifts of cloud by, at a great pace, and one was glad of the shelter of the pile of stones, the largest and *oldest* I ever saw on a mountain top. I suppose the whole mountain is named from it. It is of the shape of a bee-hive, strongly built, about fifteen feet high (so that I made Downs follow me up it before I would allow he had been at the top of the Old Man), and covered with lichen and short moss. Lancaster sands and the Irish sea were very beautiful, and so also the two lakes of Coniston and Windermere, lying in the vastest space of sweet cultivated country I ever looked over (a great part of the view from the Rigi being merely over black pine forest, even on the plains). Well, after dinner the evening was very beautiful, and I walked up the long hill on the road back from Coniston, and kept ahead of the carriage for two miles, and was sadly vexed when I had to get in; and now, I don't feel as if I had been walking at all, and shall probably lie awake for an hour or two—and feeling as if I had not had exercise enough to send me to sleep."

On returning home Ruskin went for some time to Norwood, with his mother and cousin Joan, to take, under Dr. Powell, what would now be called a rest-cure. The rest included, however, a good deal of quiet work at botany and many concerts at the Crystal Palace; and Ruskin's diary contains indications of physical discomfort and nervous depression. A letter to Acland shows that he was in ill humour with the world. Acland, who was one of the Curators of the Oxford University Galleries,[1] seems to have contemplated resigning the office, with a view to getting Ruskin appointed in his place; this arrangement would have brought Ruskin occasionally to the University, and perhaps have led him to give lectures there upon the art collections. Ruskin's reply was this:—

"*23rd September* 1867.

"My dear Acland,—Not in despair nor in sick sloth, but in a deep, though stern hope, and in reserve of what strength is in me, I refuse to talk about art. The English nation is fast, and with furious acceleration, becoming a mob to whom it will be impossible to talk about *any*thing. Read the last seven verses of yesterday's first Lesson.[2] They are literally, and in every syllable, true of England, and the weapons with which such evil may be stayed before 'the end thereof' are not camel's-hair pencils. Camel's-hair raiment might do something.

[1] See below, p. 225.

[2] Jeremiah v. (lesson for the 14th Sunday after Trinity): "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. . . . They are waxen fat, they shine. . . . The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

Digitized by Google

"You have 'no idea of folded hands, while there is hope of safety.' Nor I; but if the *Tyne* had gone off into deep water with a leak gaining on her,[1] you would not have called the carpenters to paint her sides. Nevertheless, we will keep our cabins tidy to the last (though, by the way, if you and Richmond had not had your heads full of Raphael chalk scratches and Roman plaster patches, and had worked with wider sight, you might have had the Peter Martyr in the National gallery here instead of in Hades),[2] and, if you are tired of that curatorship and think that I can be of any use, I will do the best I can. But in no phrase of politeness I tell you that you are fitter for the place than I, and working with your old friend the Dean, and entering into the fruit of your efforts for many years, you had much better stay as you are, if you are not weary.

"Ever affectionately yours,
"J. Ruskin."[3]

Acland seemed to think that this conditional acceptance was sufficient; but another friend of Ruskin, of less enthusiastic temperament, was more cautious. "Are you positively certain," wrote Dean Liddell, "that Ruskin would like to be Curator of the Galleries? Have you it in writing? And can his inclination or wish in August be depended upon in November?"[4] Liddell's cold water stopped the scheme, and Ruskin's call to Oxford was to come two years later in a different way.

Ruskin spent the winter of 1867–1868 quietly at home. He made acquaintance with Miss Jean Ingelow, whose poems he sometimes quotes at this period.[5] He went sometimes to see Coventry Patmore, "which," as he notes in his diary (January 3), "comforted and relieved me." Sir Herbert Edwardes (whose papers Ruskin was afterwards to edit[6]), Mr. Arthur Severn (who was to become so closely connected with Ruskin), and Mr. Brabazon, the artist, are among the friends whose visits are particularly recorded in the diary. Many others came to see him at Denmark Hill; but this was not always unalloyed pleasure. "Mama

[1] For Acland's coolness when wrecked in the *Tyne* (a West India Mail Company's steamer) in 1858, see *Præterita*, i. § 232.

[2] For the destruction of Titian's "Peter Martyr" by fire in 1866, see Vol. III. p. 28 *n.*

[3] This letter is reprinted from p. 369 of J. B. Atlay's *Memoir of Sir Henry Wentworth Acland*, 1903.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 369.

[5] See *Sesame and Lilies*, § 139 *n.*, and *Ethics of the Dust*, § 3 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 185 *n.*, 211).

[6] *A Knight's Faith* (in Ruskin's *Bibliotheca Pastorum*), 1885.

Digitized by Google

provoking in abuse of people," is a significant entry in the diary. His mother was affectionate, but also exacting and somewhat censorious; she was firmly persuaded that only the pernicious influence of ill-chosen friends had seduced her son from the evangelical principles which she had inculcated in his youth. She liked, too, to be mistress in her own house; and in that capacity she was a great martinet. But if her dependants feared, they also respected her, and never was an old servant turned away from her household. A charming story is told of a young friend who asked the mistress of the house what were the duties of one of several ancient maids. "She, my dear," answered the old lady, "puts out the dessert."[1] Now that advancing years had confirmed her in habits of great regularity and precision, she did not always welcome the sight of new faces and unexpected guests. We have seen, in the recollections of a visitor at an earlier date,[2] with what beautiful deference Ruskin treated his mother, and this was always his attitude, though sometimes he would venture indirectly to answer her reproaches. "At dinner," says Lady Burne-Jones, "if anything her son said, though not addressed to herself, did not reach her ear, she demanded to have it repeated, and from her end of the table came a clear thread of voice, 'John—John Ruskin—what was that you said?' When the sharply questioning sound at last penetrated to him, he never failed with the utmost respect to repeat his words for her." He met her demands upon his patience, says the same delicate observer, "with indescribable gentleness." The instinct for contradiction was strong in her, and her son's impulsive and enthusiastic talk often called it into exercise. "I remember an evening spent with her and her son," says Lady Burne-Jones, "when Edward read aloud, from Lane's *Arabian Nights*, the Story of the Barber, in which there is scarce a paragraph without some mention of God, the High, the Great, and at its conclusion Ruskin expressed great admiration for it. 'God forgive you, my child,' said a pitying voice from the fireside; and as we waited in silent astonishment for some explanation, she continued, 'for taking His name in vain.' Her son listened with perfect patience and dignity, and then, almost as if thinking aloud, answered with a solemn and simple refutation of the charge and a noble definition of what taking the name of God in vain really was. Would that I could remember his words! His mother seemed quite unmoved."[3] She was given to combating his opinions strongly and

[1] W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 282.
[2] Vol. V. p. xlviii.
[3] *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. i. pp. 252, 300.

Digitized by Google

publicly; the remark, "John, you are talking great nonsense," was often heard; and she would never admit any doubt of her own infallibility. But though she reserved to herself full liberty to criticise and contradict her son, yet no one was more sensitive than she to any criticism of him by others: like many another mother, she liked, and expected, to see her bairn respected. She loved him, as Mr. Collingwood well says, "with all the intensity of a fierce lioness nature."[1] And this was one reason why she resented anything which she considered as an attempt to impose upon his credulity or generosity. If her circle of interests was narrow, and her outlook on the problems of life and destiny confined within fixed and strict ideas, her reading of character was often as penetrating in substance as it was sharp in expression. Howell had on one occasion been regaling them with some of those wonderful tales, which are characterised in a "Limerick" by D. G. Rossetti;[2] the old lady threw down her netting, and said, "How *can* you two sit there and listen to such a pack of lies?"[3] Ruskin's tact and readiness no doubt smoothed over the outburst, and no one ever visited Denmark Hill without being struck by his gentle submissiveness.[4] But such reminiscences as have here been brought together serve to explain the entry in his diary, given above, or this passage in a letter to Professor Norton: "I'm very weary and sad. Joan is gone away—and the evenings sitting beside my mother only makes me sadder still."[5] His cousin Joan was the good angel in many domestic difficulties,[6] and her presence at Denmark Hill during these years was an equal comfort to the mother and the son.

Gradually Ruskin recovered strength and spirits, and the year 1868 was to be one of varied activity and much happy work. Already at the end of 1867 he had prepared *Time and Tide* for publication, and then, as also in the early months of 1868, he wrote and illustrated a series of geological papers. It was a bright spring-tide, and Ruskin's mood responded to it. At the beginning of the year he had a dream of good omen: "Dreamed on night of 2nd–3rd [January] of seeing

[1] *Life of John Ruskin*, p. 283.
[2] See *Rossetti Papers*, edited by W. M. Rossetti, p. 495.
[3] W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 283 (1900 edition).
[4] See, for instance, Professor Norton's *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. p. 43.
[5] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. ii. p. 26 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).
[6] For instance, Ruskin's mother "objected strongly, in these later years, to the theatre; and when sometimes her son would wish to take a party into town to see the last new piece, her permission had to be asked, and was not readily granted, unless to Miss Agnew, who was the ambassadress in such affairs of diplomacy" (W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 283, 1900 edition).

Digitized by Google

Lake of Constance, in lovely light—under sweet crisping wind and mountains far away." And, in the life of waking hours, "Could do nothing but stare[1] at the blue sky, and flowers, and intense brightness" (February 29). The Turners on the walls flashed back the glory of the days: "Up a minute or two before five. Lovely clear sunrise. Greta and Tees[2] looking prettier than ever. Read geology at my breakfast, with my two loveliest flint chalcedonies shining in the sun." And hope shone brightly, too. On May 4 a letter came from Ireland, which Ruskin notes in his diary by the one word "Peace." His Preface to "Grimm" had been written at Easter time, and he now set himself with renewed zest to write the lecture which he was to deliver in Dublin, for the sake of her who had sent him the message of peace.[3] He went to Winnington for a few days (May 6–12) to finish the lecture, and then crossed to Dublin. The lecture—on "The Mystery of Life and its Arts"—was, as we have seen,[4] a great success. After spending a few days in Dublin, Ruskin revisited Winnington (May 26 to June 1), and then returned to Denmark Hill. He was busy during July and August with speeches at the Social Science Association on strikes, and letters on the management of railways;[5] but also with cataloguing his minerals, and with "drawing drapery at Ned's."[6]

He now determined to devote himself for a while to drawing; and he chose, as being not too far from home, one of his favourite haunts—the town of Abbeville.[7] He loved the French air and the French landscape, as we have seen; and he wished to re-study, and to draw with his now more accomplished skill, the flamboyant architecture which, as a boy, he had loved intensely.[8] His diary and his letters show that he enjoyed more peace of mind during these months at Abbeville than had been his for a long time past. The first letter to his mother sets the key:—

> "*August* 25.—The old place is little spoiled yet, and I hope to get some valuable notes. The weather is lovely, and my first sketch

[1] In recording a dream at a later date (November 2), Ruskin says, "Dreamed of being in Verona, or some place that was and wasn't Venice. Met an Englishman who said 'he had been staring at things.' I said I was glad to hear it—to stare was the right thing, to *look* only was no use."

[2] The drawing by Turner, afterwards given by Ruskin to his School at Oxford: Standard Series, No. 2.

[3] See Preface to the 1871 edition of *Sesame and Lilies* (Vol. XVIII. p. 47 *n.*).

[4] See Vol. XVIII. p. lviii.

[5] Vol. XVII. pp. 528–534.

[6] Burne-Jones.

[7] He left Folkestone on August 24; was at Abbeville from August 25 to October 5; at Paris, October 6–8; and again at Abbeville, October 9–21.

[8] See *Eagle's Nest*, § 92.

Digitized by Google

has begun well, and I've had a walk afterwards on chalk hills, covered with scabious and bluebells, and I've ate a cutlet for lunch, and half a fowl and a whole pigeon and some Neuchâtel cheese for dinner, and I feel quite myself again."

He was himself again in his keen enjoyment of nature and in his unflagging interests. In the diary the entries alternate between memoranda of skies and clouds and flowers, and notes upon architectural features:—

"The line of poplars round the cemetery of the village of St. Riquier as tall as a mountain precipice, as graceful as girls."

"(*August* 30.)—Got to chalk down with branching road through dingle, exquisite, like a scene in Italy. Road wound upwards through small plantation; scabious and bluebell everywhere, and look of woods of Jura. Came out on top of down with heavenly view of the poplar groves and vale of Abbeville as far as the embouchure of the Somme.

"Beside the larkspur, in the stubble fields there grows luxuriantly a labiate plant, purple, with a little yellowish white double spot on its broadly expanded lower lip, otherwise much like euphrasy; but in such quantities that it purples the fields when one looks low along the surfaces, like the fringed soldanella of the Alps; and as that with primrose, so this is mixed with the pale yellow toadflax, giving just the same opposition of colours."

"*August* 27.—Bright morning with light breeze. I drove to St. Riquier. The town wholly desolate; the church scraped down and spoiled; the fringes which Nash represents[1] in the Lady Chapel round the windows taken away—probably falling, and too expensive to restore. St. Riquier built in 1500 precisely, marking civilization of France at end of the fifteenth century. The carving is elaborately stupid and vulgar, the last phase of flamboyant—monstrously, and to sickness, rich without design. The statues distorted and hideous."

"*August* 29.—To Rue. This chapel is the richest piece of flamboyant I have seen, and well worth study as a delicate example of the corrupt style. Its vaulted roof with pendants all chased like lace (a very fine vault, with ribs edged by knotted cable, is at St. Riquier). Its little niches with pedestals carried on long ends, emergent just under pedestal of very great grace and merit. An upper chapel is nearly as rich.

"Note that the sculpture of grotesque faces, throughout flamboyant period, is always ugly, never humorous in any true way. I am

[1] See Plate 15 in *Architecture of the Middle Ages drawn from Nature and on Stone*, by Joseph Nash: 1838.

Digitized by Google

especially shocked by the wooden brackets of the richer street houses, and by the deadly and ghastly purpose of nearly all. At Rue, the pedestal of the highest niche above entrance is formed by three skulls."[1]

"*September* 29.—Looking at black signs in square to-day, and showing Ward how much less dark they were than the open windows (*conf.* passage about this in *Elements of Drawing*[2]), I thought of Turner's late license in oil Venices of putting hollows of white campaniles in with black, even in distance. Turner took two great licenses in his later years, in black and vermilion; this, and vermilion for sun-shadow and for flesh in sunshine. Both these—or rather these three—licenses (for the third is founded on a third fact) led finally to abuse, though all three were founded on fact, and all had begun with his earliest work: in my Battle Abbey, black windows in Llanwrst no less than n Nottingham red flesh. Now, therefore, note of Turner's, as opposed to other people's licenses, how they were founded on fact; but also how their indulgence leads to evil. The black led to black and white sea pictures, with black steamers; at last to Burial of Wilkie.[3] The red shadow, to habitual vermilion outline, and general abuse of vermilion in fish, etc. The red flesh, to foreground figures and all that came of them."

"*September* 12.—Yesterday in morning at turn of river by the shipping quay,—which reminds me in the strangest way of the rapture of the last stage by the Brenta before coming in sight of Venice—the sunshine was full of white showering specks and gleams, which were a shoal of swallows who all dipped together and rose together, making the water quiver as with a shower of stones, and not merely touching it, but going fairly in, and rising heavily after a moment's bath. I was always afraid they would be caught, and not be able to get out of the water again."

"*September* 22.—Sunset on ramparts as opposite [sketch], first; then, ruby below; and at last thunderous and wild with delicate bars of flecked cloud mixed. I never saw anything more noble."

"*September* 29.—Up hill on Montreuil road—crashing shower, succeeded by divine gleam of sun on chalk banks and hedges, lurid green and tawny; then rosy and dim on cathedral and town, the cemetery spire coming out in gold, and its top fretted dark against purple grey—a perfect picture, with cathedral also dark. Finally, rainbow flushed in thunder-cloud in east."

[1] For another reference to the chapel at Rue, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 92.
[2] See Vol. XV. p. 54 *seq.*
[3] No. 528 in the National Gallery: see *Notes on the Turner Gallery* (Vol. XIII. p. 159), where Ruskin says that the picture is "spoiled by Turner's endeavour to give funereal and unnatural blackness to the sails."

Digitized by Google

Letters to his mother contain much pleasant gossip, record the pleasure which he found in sketching, and describe how he spent his days:—

"*September* 1.—I am getting into a good line of useful and peaceful work; for I feel convinced that the sketches I make now will please people, and be important records of things now soon to pass away."

"*September* 9.—I think I shall be able to write a little Stones of Abbeville when I have done, as I shall know every remnant of interest in the town."

"*Sunday evening, 7th September.*—It is as hot, I think, as it was the greatest part of the summer; I have both my windows wide open, letting in more noise than I like, at nine in the evening.

"I think you may like to know how my days are spent just now. I rise at six, get everything in order for the day, cast up accounts of previous one, to the last sou, and then go out for a stroll on the ramparts, where the effects of morning mists are lovely among the tall trees and huge red walls. I come in to breakfast—French roll and tea at eight—and read Italian history, Sismondi, till nine. Then I go out to draw, for two hours and a half, or a little over, always stopping before twelve. From twelve to one another stroll, about the streets, and so in to lunch—a chop or steak or bit of cold game. After that I write my letters and rest—generally falling asleep for a minute or two (though not so happily as beside you) till three. At three I go out again for my second drawing from three to five. At five I stop for the day, and start on my main walk from five to seven. At seven I come in to dinner (no pastry or dessert), and I have tea immediately afterwards, and so rest till half-past nine, and then to bed."

"*September* 18.—Many thanks for the little interrupted note; but you seem to have a most uncomfortable time of it, with the disturbance of the house. However, I can only leave you to manage these things as you think best, or feel pleasantest to yourself.

"I am saddened by another kind of disorder—France is in everything so fallen back, so desolate and comfortless compared to what it was twenty years ago—the people so much rougher, clumsier, more uncivilized—everything they do, vulgar and base. Remnants of the old nature come out when they begin to know you. I am drawing at a nice tallow-chandler's door, and to-day, for the first time, had to go inside for rain. He was very courteous and nice, and warned me against running against the candle-ends, or bottoms, as they were piled on the shelves, saying, 'You must take care, you see, not to steal any of my candles—or steal *from* my candles,' meaning not to rub them off on my coat. He has a beautiful

Digitized by Google

family of cats—papa and mama an[1] two superb kittens—half Angora.

"Work going on well."[1]

The talks with the tallow-chandler who figures in this and the following letter are recorded in *Fors Clavigera*, where Ruskin describes how he engaged his friend on the ethics of candles, ecclesiastical and domestic.[2]

"(*September* 22.)—I am just going to my cats and tallow-chandler. . . . I am very much struck by the superiority of manner, both in him and in his two daughters, who serve at the counter, to persons of the same class in England. When the girls have weighed out their candles, or written down the orders that are sent in, they instantly sit down to their needlework behind the counter, and are always busy, yet always quiet; and their father, though of course there may be vulgar idioms in his language which I do not recognize, has entirely the manners of a gentleman."

"(*September* 30.)—I have one advantage here I had not counted on. I see by the papers that the weather in England is very stormy and bad. Now, though it is showery here, and breezy, it has always allowed me at some time of the day to draw—the air is tender and soft, invariably, even when blowing with force; and to-day I have seen quite the loveliest sunset I ever yet saw—one at Boulogne, in '61, was richer,[3] but for delicacy and loveliness, nothing of past sight ever came near this."

"*September* 30.—I am well satisfied with the work I am doing, and even with my own power of doing it, if only I can keep myself from avariciously trying to do too much, and working hurriedly. But I can do *very* little quite *well* each day; with that little, however, it is my bounden duty to be content.

"And now I have a little piece of news for you. Our old Herne Hill house being now tenantless and requiring some repairs before I can get a tenant, I have resolved to keep it myself for my rougher mineral work and mass of collections, keeping only my finest specimens at Denmark Hill. My first reason for this is affection for the old house; my second, want of room; my third,

[1] The letter of September 18 (in part) and the passages from the letters of September 18, 22, and 30, and October 19 have appeared in W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, pp. 251–254 (1900 edition).

[2] Letter 6. And, in this volume, see the conclusion of the Abbeville lecture (p. 267).

[3] In a letter to his father from Boulogne, August 4, 1861, Ruskin wrote: "The sunset on Friday evening here was without exception the most beautiful, and by far the most beautiful, I have ever seen in my life. It consisted of bars of ruby-coloured cloud, waved like sand, with a *fineness* of wave I never saw approached."

Digitized by Google

the incompatibility of hammering, washing, and experimenting on stones with cleanliness in my stores of drawings; and my fourth is the power I shall have, when I want to do anything very quietly, of going up the hill and thinking it out in the old garden, where your greenhouse still stands, and the aviary, without fear of interruption from callers.

"It may perhaps amuse you, in hours which otherwise would be listless, to think over what may be done with the old house. I have ordered it at once to be put in proper repair by Mr. Snell, but for the furnishing I can give no directions at present; it is to be very simple, at all events, and calculated chiefly for museum work and for store of stones and books, and you really must not set your heart on having it furnished like Buckingham Palace.

"I have bought to-day, for five pounds, the front of the porch of the Church of St. James. It was going to be entirely destroyed. It is worn away, and has little of its old beauty, but as a remnant of the Gothic of Abbeville—as I happen to be here, and as the church was dedicate to my father's patron saint (as distinct from mine)—I'm glad to have got it. It is a low arch, with tracery and niches, which ivy and the Erba della Madonna will grow over beautifully, wherever I rebuild it."

"(*October* 19.)—I am glad to come home, though much mortified at having failed in half my plans, and done nothing compared to what I expected. But it is better than if I were displeased with all I *had* done. It isn't Turner; and it isn't Correggio; it isn't even Prout; but it isn't bad."

Of the drawings which Ruskin thus made at Abbeville some account is given below, in the description of the illustrations to the present volume (p. lxxv.). He had occasional distractions, in the visits of assistants and friends. Mr. William Ward joined him for a while. He had Downs, too, for a week, to show him the country and how the French market-gardeners raised their melons. Professor Norton also visited him. "He spent most of the day in drawing, studying the church from various points, and portraying the elaborate and fanciful details of its architecture with the mastery of genius." Norton carried him off for a day or two to Paris, where they fell in with Longfellow, whose poetry Ruskin often much admired, and the poet's brother-in-law, Tom Appleton. "There could not be a pleasanter dinner," adds Professor Norton, "than that which we had one evening at Meurice's. Ruskin, Longfellow, and Appleton were each at his respectively unsurpassed best, and when late at night the little company broke up, its members parted from each other as if all had been old

Digitized by Google

friends."[1] Ruskin was, indeed, in a good mood during most of these months in France. "I went to my work," he notes in his diary (September 18), "for the first time this many and many a day singing a little to myself."

His main work was drawing; his intellectual interests were still much scattered. He was reading a good deal in the classics, and at one page of the diary he notes a morning spent on "planning concentration of work on antiquities." But in the afternoon he came down from Athena in the Air, and worked at "paper on employment"—that is, the pamphlet of *Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes*, which he issued for private circulation later in the year.[2]

This was the subject which absorbed much of Ruskin's time after his return from Abbeville at the end of October. A committee had been formed of persons interested in the subject of the Unemployed; Ruskin was on the general committee, and also on the executive subcommittee. He had a point of view of his own—sufficiently indicated in his *Notes*—and fought hard for such recognition of it as was possible. He found a valuable coadjutor in Cardinal (then Archbishop) Manning, and records some of his successes in the diary. "Hard fight on Committee; dine at Froude's" (December 4); "Did grand piece of work on Committee" (December 1). In letters to Mrs. Norton,[3] he gives a lively account of his difficulties and his devices. "Everybody sends me their opinions privately; I pick out what I want and prepare it as Mr. So-and-so's, patting it hard on the back." He saw the truth of Jowett's saying, that the way to get things done is not to mind who gets the credit of doing them.

Professor Norton, who with his wife and family was at this time staying at Keston in Kent, has described how "Ruskin did everything to make our stay in the country pleasant, coming over to see us, often writing and sending books or water-colour drawings by Turner, himself, and others, to light up the somewhat dull rooms of the little old Rectory in which we were living; sending also gifts to my little children. . . . To give pleasure was his delight."[4] Keston is close to Downe, and on one occasion Professor Norton arranged a meeting between Ruskin and Darwin. "Ruskin's gracious courtesy," he says, "was matched by Darwin's charming and genial simplicity.

[1] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. pp. 178, 179.
[2] See Vol. XVII. pp. 540–546.
[3] Reprinted in a later volume of this edition from *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. i. pp. 187–193.
[4] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. pp. 176, 196.

Digitized by Google

Ruskin was full of questions which interested the elder naturalist by the keenness of observation and the variety of scientific attainment which they indicated, and their animated talk afforded striking illustration of the many sympathies that underlay the divergence of their points of view and of their methods of thought. The next morning Darwin rode over on horseback to say a pleasant word about Ruskin, and two days afterward Ruskin wrote, 'Mr. Darwin was delightful.'"[1] At a later date Darwin came over to see Ruskin at Denmark Hill, and Ruskin visited him at Downe. Darwin's biographer gives an amusing account of his father's courteous but feigned appreciation of the treasures of Denmark Hill:—

"This way of looking at himself as an ignoramus in all matters of art was strengthened by the absence of pretence, which was part of his character. With regard to questions of taste, as well as to more serious things, he always had the courage of his opinions. I remember, however, an instance that sounds like a contradiction to this: when he was looking at the Turners in Mr. Ruskin's bedroom, he did not confess, as he did afterwards, that he could make out absolutely nothing of what Mr. Ruskin saw in them. But this little pretence was not for his own sake, but for the sake of courtesy to his host. He was pleased and amused when subsequently Mr. Ruskin brought him some photographs of pictures (I think Vandyke portraits), and courteously seemed to value my father's opinion about them.[2]

There is a reference in this volume to Darwin's "unwearied and unerring investigations";[3] and it could be wished that Ruskin had always observed the same amenity of tone in his published criticisms of the great naturalist.

The other preoccupation which Ruskin notes as holding him during the weeks following his return from Abbeville is characteristic: "This last fortnight entirely taken up with Committees, and considering what to do in the winter among my old stores." He turned now to "history of the 16th century" and then to "mosses."[4] Botany seemed for a time to be winning in the race for Ruskin's immediate attention, but in the end he set himself down to Greek mythology, and wrote a lecture on "Greek Myths of Storm"; though, to be sure,

[1] *Letters of John Ruskin*, vol. i. p. 195.
[2] *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, edited by his son, Francis Darwin, vol. i. pp. 125–126.
[3] *Queen of the Air*, § 62 *n.* (p. 358).
[4] See the account of a conversation with Miss Roberts given in Vol. XVIII. p. l. It may be noted also that the first chapter of *Proserpina* is dated November 3, 1868.

Digitized by Google

when he printed the lecture in a book—*The Queen of the Air*—a good deal of botany managed to find a place.[1] First, however, he had another task on hand—the preparation of his lecture for the Royal Institution on Flamboyant Architecture. "Much teased," he writes in the diary (January 12), "with too much to get into Abbeville lecture." This was a form of teasing to which Ruskin always found himself subjected; his mind was so full, his thought so active and wide-ranging that he ever saw the universal in the particular, and, at each turn of the road, found his subject branching off into innumerable directions. In the end, however, the Abbeville lecture got itself into consistent shape and manageable compass; though, indeed, he afterwards detached some thoughts on the relations of art and morality as more appropriate elsewhere than "in incidental connection with the porches of Abbeville,"[2] and though, too, his material overflowed into an illustrative catalogue.

The Abbeville lecture was delivered on January 29, 1869. The next three months were devoted to *The Queen of the Air*, the lectures on which the book is founded having been delivered on March 9 and 15. When he set himself to gather up his materials into a book, the work, as usual, grew under his hands;[3] he was beginning to feel the stress of close application; and having finished the last page, he left home for rest and change in Switzerland and Italy, entrusting to his friend Professor Norton, who was then in England, the task of seeing the book finally through the press. He wrote the Preface at Vevay. Some notes upon the volume, which was published in June, are given at a later place in this Introduction (p. lxv.). Before he left England he also prepared the catalogue for fifty of his less treasured drawings and pictures, mostly by Turner, which were sold at Christie's (Vol. XIII. pp. 569–572).

Ruskin was away on this occasion for four months, spending most of the time at Verona,[4] but sometimes going over to Venice for a few

[1] §§ 74–87: see below, pp. 367–377.

[2] See *Queen of the Air*, § 101 (below, p. 389).

[3] See in *Letters to Norton*, vol. i. p. 200, the letter of April 12, 1869 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).

[4] His itinerary was as follows: Paris (April 27), Dijon (April 29), Neuchâtel (April 30), Vevay (May 1), Martigny (May 3), Domo d'Ossola (May 5), Baveno (May 6), Verona (May 9), Venice (May 11), Verona (May 14), Venice (July 1), Verona (July 2), Venice (July 16), Verona (July 18), Padua (July 19), Verona (July 21), Venice (July 29), Verona (August 10), Brescia (August 11), Milan (August 12), Como and Lugano (August 14), Faido and Hospenthal (August 15), Bekenried (August 16), Giessbach (August 18), Thun (August 24), Giessbach (August 25), Neuchâtel (August 28).

Digitized by Google

days. As in the previous year he had gone to Abbeville to revise his impressions of the French architecture which he had studied for *The Seven Lamps*, so now he revisited another of his favourite haunts—Verona, the town which, he says, "represented the faith and the beauty of Italy,"[1] and there, and at Venice, he reconsidered the conclusions he had formed in *The Stones of Venice*. In the main he found nothing to retract. "I am *very* glad to find," he wrote to his mother from Venice (August 7), "that after seventeen years I can certify the truth of every word of *The Stones of Venice* as far as regards art." One new discovery, however, he made among the Venetian pictures. "This Carpaccio," he wrote to Burne-Jones (May 13), "is a new world to me."[2] In the sphere of architecture and history he found that his main conclusions had been right, but the studies of the intervening years now suggested many qualifications, connexions, and reserves which occurred to him:—

> "The work still goes on well," he writes from Verona (June 16), "except in one respect, that the questions I have to consider respecting architectural styles have become difficult and interminable to me in proportion to my knowledge. I am like a physician who has begun practice as an apothecary's boy, and gone on serenely and not unsuccessfully treating his patients under rough notions, generally applicable enough—as, that cold is caught sitting in a draught, and stomach-ache by eating too many plums, and the like—but who has read, at last, and thought, so much about the mucous membrane and the liver, that he dares not give anybody a dose of salts without a day's reflection on the circumstances of the case. However, there *is* great and true difficulty in tracing the sources of the power of different schools of art, and I don't get on with my *thinking* work at all just now."

But the more he sketched and studied, the more he saw his way; and as in France he had planned a *Stones of Abbeville*, so now he seems to have intended a *Stones of Verona*.[3] "I think my work on Verona," he writes to his mother (June 21), "though much shorter, will be a far better one than on Venice." Ultimately the work took no more elaborate form than the lecture on Verona which comes last in the present volume. It is packed full of subjects which are glanced

[1] *Præterita*, ii. § 140.
[2] The letter, with other references to Ruskin's "discovery" of Carpaccio, is printed in Vol. IV. p. 356 *n*. See also *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 20.
[3] He uses the phrase in § 10 of the lecture (below, p. 434).

Digitized by Google

at rather than fully discussed, and it was illustrated by an exhibition of drawings, several of which are here reproduced. In letters to his mother we may trace the impressions and the thoughts which crowded Ruskin's mind during these months of study at Verona, and which coloured his lecture:—

"DOMO D'OSSOLA, *May* 5.—I never yet had so beautiful a day for the Simplon as this has been, though the skin of my face is burning now all over—to keep me well in mind of its sunshine. I left Brieg at six exactly—light clouds breaking away into perfect calm of blue. Heavy snow on the Col—about a league, with the wreaths in many places higher than the carriage. Then, white crocus all over the fields, with Soldanella and Primula farinosa. I walked about three miles up, and seven down, with great contentment—the waterfalls being all in rainbows, and one beyond anything I ever yet saw, for it fell in a pillar of spray against shadow behind, and became rainbow altogether. I was just near enough to get the belt broad, and the down part of the arch; and the whole fall became orange and violet against deep shade. To-morrow I hope to get news of you all, at Baveno.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."[1]

"BAVENO, *May* 6.—It is wet this morning and very dismal, for we are in a ghastly new Inn, the old one being shut up, and there is always a reaction after a strong excitement like the beauty of the Simplon yesterday, which leaves one very dull. But it is of no use growling or mewing. I hope to be at Milan to-morrow—at Verona for Sunday. I have been reading Dean Swift's Life and *Gulliver's Travels* again. Putting the delight in dirt, which is a mere disease, aside, Swift is very like me, in most things—in opinions exactly the same."[2]

"VERONA, *May* 10.—My father's birthday generally brings me some good. . . . To-day . . . soft air and light, among the tombs of noble people, and rest, with those who can love, and be betrayed, no more."

"VENICE, *May* 11.—I am much surprised to find how great pleasure I can take in this place still. It is much less injured than

[1] This letter is given in W. G. Collingwood's *Life of John Ruskin*, p. 259 (1900 edition).

[2] Also in Collingwood, p. 259. For the last sentence, see Vol. XVIII. p. lxi.

Digitized by Google

I expected, and it seems as if the seventeen years had passed like a dream, and left me here again, my old self, only wiser and capable of better judgment and work, though with failing strength."

"VERONA, *May* 16.—I am now completely in my element—or rather, in my *two* elements—for every piece of sculpture here is as interesting in mineralogy as in art. I never saw such wonderful marbles in my life, and they are all from the mountains close by; also, now that I know more and feel more about Italian history, every corner of the churches becomes interesting to me, and I hope to put some things together in a way that will interest others."

"VERONA, *May* 21.—I had a sunset last night which convinced me that, after all, there is nothing so picture-like as the colour of Italian landscape. There were some blue mountains beyond the Lago di Garda seen against the light, and they were of a blue exactly like the blue of paint, or of the bloom of a plum, a lovely plain, covered with vines and cypresses, being all round, to the south and west, and soft lower slopes of Alp on the north. I never saw anything more heavenly."

"*May* 25.—It is very strange that I have just been in time—after seventeen years' delay—to get the remainder of what I wanted from the red tomb of which my old drawing hangs in the passage. To-morrow they put up scaffolding to retouch, and, I doubt not, spoil it for evermore. But I have always my great plan of fighting the Rhone to fall back upon."[1]

"*May* 26.—I am getting on quite beautifully with my drawing. . . . But hitherto I have had to draw against time. I got a delay of ten days in putting up a scaffolding, and I have had to do all I could in the time; it has hurried and confused me much."

Notes on the drawings of the Castelbarco Tomb here referred to will be found in Ruskin's "Verona" Catalogue (below, pp. 451–453). When the work of restoration, or destruction, was accomplished, he bought "one of the stones of the roof of my dear old red tomb"; it has "part of its new white cap on," he writes (July 23), "and looks like a Venetian gentleman in a Pantaloon's mask." Two days later he "got at the stone-mason who long ago restored the broken pieces of the tomb of Can Signorio, and got from him one of the original little shafts of the niches. It is in a splendid, largely crystalline white marble (I think Greek, not Italian), and is a perfect example of the chiselling at Verona in the fourteenth century. It is only about a yard high, and I shall carry it home myself like a barometer, wrapt in paper."

[1] This extract is given in Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 263.

Digitized by Google

In preserving records of the falling Stones of Verona, Ruskin had the assistance of J. W. Bunney:[1]—

"VERONA, *June* 3.—I am getting on well with all my own work, and much pleased with some that Mr. Bunney is doing for me, so that really I expect to carry off a great deal of Verona—especially if this cool weather lasts. . . . The only mischief of the place is its being too rich. Stones, flowers, mountains, all equally asking one to look at them—a history to every foot of ground, and a picture on every foot of wall, frescoes fading away in the neglected streets—like the colours of the dolphin.[2] And I *can* only do—so much—so little!—every day."

"VERONA, *June* 7.—I enjoy my *mornings* here immensely. I get up at quarter to five and dress quietly, looking out at the morning light on the tomb of the Count Castelbarco (my favourite old red one); then at quarter to six I go to the café at the corner of the square and sip my cup of coffee, looking at the lovely old porch of St. Anastasia; then by six o'clock I am at my work, as I used to be in 1845, which it is great pleasure to me to find still possible. Then I come in to breakfast at half-past eight and read a little—then draw again till eleven, when I come in to write my letters—then I rest till three—then get a couple of hours more work—and then my walk before dinner. I dine at eight, just now—for else I should lose the sunset (but seven is better)—and get to bed at ten. But there's so much to do!"

"VERONA, *June* 8.—This place would be *too* beautiful and delightful—if only it were utterly desolate. But the human creatures of it are horrible. They live in a perpetual anger with their neighbours, their cattle, and themselves, for they have all a discontented and downcast look, which means scorn of self, and they cannot speak but in loud fury if the question be but of a cabbage stalk. I was thinking of Frederick the Great's final scorn of mankind, to-day—the end of all his labour.[3] I believe if one tries energetically to do good, one will always see little but evil in men; and if one tries to do evil, one develops the good, so contradictory are the fates. However, mind, I don't give in to the "corruption of human

[1] For previous references to Bunney, see Vol. III. p. 210; Vol. V. p. xli.; Vol. X. pp. lxiii.-lxiv.; and Vol. XIV. p. xix. Several of the drawings which he made for Ruskin are in the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford: see *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 83, in Vol. XX., where a note is now added upon the artist and his work.

[2] This extract (down to this point) is in Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 264.

[3] See Carlyle's *Friedrich*, book xxi. ch. ix.: "He well knew himself to be dying. From of old, Life has been infinitely contemptible to him. . . . That the unfathomable Demiurgus should concern himself with such a set of paltry ill-given animalcules as oneself and mankind are, this also, as we have often noticed, is in the main incredible to him."

Digitized by Google

nature,"[1] any more than, if I had to live in the Pontine marshes, I would allow a theory of the general corruption of water."

"VERONA, *June* 10.—If I remember rightly, you used to take some interest in Mr. Bunney. You may like to know he is doing most lovely work for me[2]—coloured drawings of the buildings, large—while I myself draw the detail, requiring (though I say it) my advanced judgment to render accurately. Alas! the judgment is still far before the manual power. I was quarter of an hour yesterday vainly trying to draw a fold of Can Grande's mantle.[3] But I do better than any one else would. For no one else would even try.

"I had a wonderful drive yesterday afternoon among the loveliest *soft* mountains I ever saw, undulating themselves like folds of the fairest purple drapery, with Verona on the other side in the plain, her many towers looking almost like a fleet of ships on far-off sea.

"There is such a lovely *wayside* flower here, literally a wayside rose; it is a white, or pale yellow, potentilla, looking just like a small white rose growing as a buttercup does."

"VERONA, *June* 15.—I framed last night, to keep it safe, a really very lovely pencil drawing of the tomb of Can Grande,[4] and this morning before breakfast got two arches of the most precious of the old bridges, and in fact am for once losing no time; all the drawings coming more or less well.

"The perpetual irritation caused by the misery and folly of the people (an *inbred* folly of many generations which, if one could even grind the whole race of them in the valley of Chamouni for a mortar, with Mont Blanc, upside down, for a pestle, one couldn't grind out of them in one grain or tittle) are perhaps very good for me in fixing the resolutions I have been making for resistance to the evil of the times.

"I have a lovely letter from Mrs. Cowper, so much interested in all my plans."

"VERONA, *June* 22.—I am 'getting quite round' my favourite Griffin. I am painting him on the other side from that I engraved in *Modern Painters*, and the marble of him comes all into beautiful orange and grey, and I'm continually finding out new feathers and sinews in him that I did not know of.[5]

"The before-breakfast hours are very delightful, just now. The fresh snow on the hills; sky cleared by rain, luxuriant vines, almost

[1] See *Queen of the Air*, § 71 (p. 365).
[2] See, for instance, No. 11 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue, and Nos. 8, 9, 10, 16 in the "Verona" Catalogue; below, pp. 271, 451, 453.
[3] See Plate A in Vol. XI. (p. 88).
[4] Perhaps one of the drawings from which Plate XXIII. here (p. 441) is reproduced.
[5] See No. 4 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 449).

Digitized by Google

at every house corner as well as covering the hills, and the towers and bridges of the city huge in morning mist.

"But the unhappy people with no hope, nor understanding, nor reverence, nor delight, and yet so capable of all—if they were cared for. It is living in a city of the dead—disquieted and troublous.

"The *old* dead are so much more really living, by their work. At St. Zeno this morning I was at work on two lines of fresco—one of fourteenth century—*modern*, which, where broken away, showed large spaces of twelfth-century fresco beneath it, and both first-rate of their kind."

"VERONA, *June* 25.—I've just come in from my morning walk—the worst of it is, there's too much everywhere, like having illuminated missals laid open before one in a long row. To-day at St. Fermo Maggiore I found out two or three beautiful things in one corner of the porch[1] in ten minutes, any one of which would take a day to draw, or to explain; then just as I was going away, I saw a shoot of new vine running up over the most perfect *ivy*, both of them holding to a lovely wall of red brick and white marble of the thirteenth century. Now, fancy that! the lovely colour of brick and marble six hundred years old, and over it perfect ivy and young vine in luxuriant shoots—it was enough to drive one wild, and this kind of thing is at every corner.

"Drawings go on very beautifully—but *so* slowly.

"I had the loveliest view last night of all yet. The weather is settling, and I had a calm sunset over the Lago di Garda, its purple mountains relieved against its silver shield—all seen from the sweetest bank of balmy thyme and grass—in a garden of vines. There is one good in the noise and evil of the town, it makes the peace of the fields so precious."

"VERONA, *June* 28.—It is curious how exactly this place unites all the things I have chiefly studied—so as to enable me to bring myself *all* out, in what I shall have to say of it.

"The rock on which its walls are built was the first in which fossil remains were ever studied; here, first, it was suggested that they were remains of real shells and not mere illusions of chance.[2] And, as I have said before, the flowers are supremely beautiful and wonderful also, and the mountain views unrivalled, and all this with four early churches of twelfth and thirteenth century—any one of which would be enough to occupy me for a year—besides the Scaliger tombs, and the street palaces.

"I hope to do a very interesting piece of work upon it, but I am but just in time."

[1] See Nos. 8–10 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 451).
[2] See below, "Verona and its Rivers," § 2 (p. 430 *n.*).

Digitized by Google

"VERONA, *June* 29.—I never did so much work in a given time as I have in this last month, and all of it is more or less good, and satisfactory. And at least (which is my principal reason for doing it) such as it is, no one but I could do it. I have been all this morning drawing a bit of the old Scala ironwork, with all its jags and breaks and bends; everybody else would take the pattern and do it all neat, and the beauty of ages—if any one cares for it—*can* only be got in my way."[1]

"VERONA, *June* 30.—I was looking over all my work last night, and it really is very good, and there's a great deal of it.

"The history is becoming immensely interesting to me as I read more of the old books about it. The great difficulty is not to over-excite myself or do too much, all the more difficult because my thoughts both of life and death are not cheerful, so that rest is always a sort of 'Now here are two hours which I have to spend only in walking towards the End—two hours lost, out of short life.'

"I do not know how much you cared to hear about my Alpine plans. I hope that I shall get times of more refreshing work and thought in them."

"VERONA, *July* 5.—I dined early yesterday and drove a good way towards the head of the Lago di Garda to see the rocks of marble on the road. They are full of interest, and make the most beautiful landscapes, with the cypresses and vines that belong to them. I ought to do some wonderful work, joining my geology and art and political economy all together in this essay on Verona. I was at work rather hard this morning at six o'clock drawing a sea-horse on a palace gate, and now I'm so sleepy (twelve) that I can't write legibly; so I won't write any more, but will rest a little."

"VERONA, *July* 6.—I went yesterday for a little run up the valley which ascends to the Tyrol, and had a mountain walk which did me good. But I never felt more distinctly that I was more in my place at Verona than on the hills, and that while many people could draw mountains, no one could draw statues or frescoes as well as I could; that is to say, perceiving as exactly where their beauty lay."

"VENICE, *August* 3.—You will never believe it, but I have actually been all the morning trying to draw—a baby.[2] The baby which the priest is holding in the little copy of Tintoret by Edward Jones which my father liked so much, over the basin-stand in his bedroom.

[1] Ruskin's drawing of the ironwork may be seen in Plate B in Vol. XI. (p. 99). See also the piece of "iron-lace" engraved in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 2.

[2] This is a water-colour copy of the child in Tintoret's "Presentation in the Temple," or "Circumcision": the picture is in the Scuola di San Rocco (see Vol. XI. p. 409). Ruskin's study of the child is now No. 96 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The copy by Burne-Jones is also now at Oxford (No. 225 in the Educational Series).

Digitized by Google

All the knowledge I have gained in these seventeen years[1] only makes me more full of awe and wonder at Tintoret. But it *is* so sad—so sad:—no one to care for him but me, and all going so fast to ruin.

"He has done that infant Christ in about five minutes, and I worked for two hours in vain, and could not tell *why* in vain—the *mystery* of his touch is so great."[2]

"VENICE, *August* 8 (*Sunday*).—I have done my work—at Venice—for this time; but it has been very serious work, bearing much on the question of the principal employment of what remains to *me* of life, and bringing before me, in the sternest way, the laws of life for others. For here in one city may be seen the effects of extreme aristocracy and extreme democracy—of the highest virtues and worst sins—of the greatest arts and the most rude simplicities of humanity. It is the history of all men, not 'in a nutshell,' but in a nautilus shell—my white nautilus[3] that I painted so carefully is a lovely type of Venice."

An inspection of the drawings in the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford is necessary in order to give an idea of the large amount of work which Ruskin did with the pencil and the brush during his summer at Verona in 1869. He worked hard, and allowed himself few distractions. But he much enjoyed occasional days spent with his old and dearly loved friend, Rawdon Brown, at Venice. A chance meeting in Verona with Longfellow, whom Ruskin had seen in Paris the year before,[4] also gave him much pleasure, as also a subsequent meeting with Holman Hunt in Venice:—

"VERONA.[5]—As I was drawing in the square this morning in a lovely, quiet, Italian light, there came up the poet Longfellow with his little daughter, a girl of twelve or thirteen, with *springy*-curled flaxen hair—curls, or waves, that wouldn't come out in damp, I mean. They stayed talking beside me some time. I don't think it was a very vain thought that came over me, that if a photograph could have been taken of the beautiful square of Verona, in that soft light, with Longfellow and his daughter talking to me at my work, some people both in England and America would have liked copies of it."

[1] That is, since 1851–1852, when Ruskin was writing the last two volumes of *Stones of Venice*, containing, in the Venetian Index, the account of Tintoret's works in the Scuola di San Rocco.

[2] This letter is reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 266.

[3] A study by Ruskin of the Paper Nautilus is No. 196 in the Educational Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.).

[4] Above, p. xliii.

[5] The letter is dated May 4, a slip of the pen for June. It is in W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 264.

Digitized by Google

"VENICE, *July* 1.—The painter, Holman Hunt, is here, and yesterday I showed him the Scuola di San Rocco, and I thought again if there could have been got two photographs—one of the piazza at Verona, with Longfellow and me, and another of Tintoret's Annunciation, with Holman Hunt and me examining it—both of them would find some sale with the British public."

The reader will have noticed allusions in some foregoing letters to "Alpine plans," and many notes upon the contrast between the beauties of nature and of art and the misery of the human beings in the midst of them. This is a refrain, perpetually recurring, in all Ruskin's later books and letters. He dare not be happy, with so much pain around him; he cannot be miserable, with so much beauty to enjoy and to interpret:—

"VERONA, *June* 17*th*, 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—The weather is quite cool and pleasant, and the after-dinner drives are entirely delightful. Yesterday I was up the hills far above the town, looking down on Verona on one side, and over the great plain as far as Padua on the other, with the Alps to the north; and the hill all over sweet wild grass at the top, with the skylarks singing, as if there were really no harm in the world at all.

"All these things do not make me happy—nothing will ever do that; and I should be ashamed if anything could, while the earth is so full of misery. But they are very good and comforting to me, and help me to do my work better.

"I am painting the Roman bridge over the Adige very successfully.[1]

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."

The Alpine plans of which he speaks had often been in his mind before,[2] and he reverted to them as he passed through Switzerland in this year on his way to Verona, where, too, he found the same problem awaiting solution as in the valley of the Rhone:—

"BRIEG, *May* 4.—I have been forming some plans as I came up the valley from Martigny. I never saw it so miserable, and all might be cured if they would only make reservoirs for the snow waters and use them for agriculture, instead of letting them run down into the Rhone, and I think it is in my power to show this."

[1] This is the Ponte della Pietra. The drawing is No. 295 in the Educational Series at Oxford.

[2] See, for instance, *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 391, and *Munera Pulveris*, § 147 (Vol. XVII. p. 270).

Digitized by Google

At Verona he had heard from some of his peasant friends at Chamouni, and he still hoped to carry out experiments there in curbing the mountain torrents:—

"VERONA (*May* 22).—I know that the thing can be done, and all these great monstrous dragons of rivers harnessed, and made fruitful and serviceable in all their waves."

"VERONA, *June* 2.—I had yesterday your lovely letter of 29th May, as nicely written as could be, in spite of bad pens, and saying that you would have pleasure in the thought of my having that land at Chamouni, which it gives me great delight to know. I think it very likely I shall get it. I see more and more clearly every day my power of showing how the Alpine torrents may be—not subdued—but 'educated.'[1] A torrent is just like a human creature—left to gain full strength in wantonness and rage, no power can any more redeem it; but watch the channels of every early impulse and fence *them*, and your torrent becomes the gentlest and most blessing of servants."

"FAIDO, *August* 14.—This is the village just below Turner's great torrent scene, where I stayed—ages ago—to draw it. I could not get farther this evening, for the St. Gothard road was last year carried away for miles by the inundations, and one has now to work one's way through cart-loads of sand; but there is no more difficulty now between me and the top.

"Is it not strange that Turner should at once have fixed on *this* torrent, as his exponent and example of the fury of Alpine stream; and that eighteen years after his death I should find the most tremendous desolation I ever saw in the Alps, caused by this same stream.[2]

"No other, in the whole range of Alpine river, has yet given me the idea of its being unopposable; but I do *not* see how to deal with this Ticino.

"All its tributaries descend from beds of clear hard rock. Every drop comes down as clean as by a pipe from a house roof, and nearly as steep down, and you have forty miles of Alps on each side drained clean and clear into the Ticino in four hours after the storm begins!

"The plague of it, too, *this* time, is that every chief burst of it was over a village. Of the village of Giornico, once the prettiest in the valley, only half the houses are yet standing, in the midst of heaps of rocks, rolled stones, and sand.

[1] Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 19, *ad fin.*

[2] For another reference to the inundations of the Ticino in 1868, see "Verona and its Rivers," § 30; below, p. 446.

Digitized by Google

"I shall enjoy the St. Gothard drawing,[1] however, when I get home, more than ever, which is very heartless and wicked; but I shall."

He had, too, in his mind those larger schemes of social reform to which reference has already been made in this Introduction. He speaks of one of them in a letter to his mother:—

"VERONA, *June* 18.—Yesterday, it being quite cool, I went for a walk, and as I came down from a rather quiet hillside a mile or two out of town, I passed a house where the women were at work spinning the silk off the cocoons. There was a sort of whirring sound as in an English mill; but at intervals they sang a long sweet chant, all together, lasting about two minutes, then pausing a minute and then beginning again. It was good and tender music, and the multitude of voices prevented any sense of failure, so that it was all very lovely and sweet, and like the things that I mean to try to bring to pass."[2]

Ruskin's letters to Professor Norton of this date show how full his mind was of the question of inundations. He was bent on "redeeming that valley of the Rhone." He would try and interest the Alpine Club in the scheme,[3] and if they would not take it up, he would "do *one* hillside himself." On one of his flying visits from Verona to Venice he met an engineer who was interested in a scheme for constructing an aqueduct. He had conversations, too, with Signor Carlo Blumenthal, the Venetian banker, who was connected with the management of the lagoons. To both of them he preached his gospel of educating the streams. If men would only catch the waste water where it fell, and keep it till they wanted it, instead of letting it run down into the valleys, the arid Alps would be "one garden," and the inundations of the Ticino and the Adige need never recur. "Every field its pond, every ravine its reservoir" was his principle;[4] and he was determined to show, if only on one hillside, how the thing could be done. When he returned home he laid his various schemes before Carlyle, who received report of them with sympathy, if with some criticism:—

"Ruskin," says Froude, "was becoming more and more interesting to him. Ruskin seemed to be catching the fiery cross from his hand, as his

[1] Turner's "Pass of Faido," so often engraved and discussed by Ruskin: see Vol. VI. pp. xxv., xxvi.

[2] Reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 265. The incident is referred to in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 32. For "the things I mean to try to bring to pass," see the account in a later volume of the Langdale Linen Industry.

[3] See also Vol. XVIII. p. lii.

[4] See *Letters to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. i. pp. 207–237, reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

Digitized by Google

own strength was failing. Writing this autumn [1869] to myself, he said, 'One day, by express desire on both sides, I had Ruskin for some hours, really interesting and entertaining. He is full of projects, of generous prospective activities, some of which I opined to him would prove chimerical. There is, in singular environment, a ray of real Heaven in R. Passages of that last book *Queen of the Air* went into my heart like arrows.'"[1]

"Don't neglect," Carlyle wrote to Ruskin himself (October 1), "to call on me the first time you are in town—the sight of your face will be a comfort, and I long for a little further talk on the problems you are occupied with. . . . *Come*, and let us settle some *weekly* evening again; why not?"

Ruskin's projects as expounded to Carlyle, and many other plans, were, however, to be interrupted by a call to fresh work which he received towards the close of his sojourn in Italy in 1869. He was never to carry out in practice, on any considerable scale, the schemes of aquatic engineering to which he had given so much thought. But he touched upon them in his lecture on "Verona," to which he added in the title "and its Rivers"; in his letters on Roman Inundations (Vol. XVII.); and often, incidentally, in *Fors Clavigera*. The news of his call to new duties at Oxford was sent home in two letters to his mother:—

"LUGANO, *Saturday, 14th August* 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—Yesterday—exactly three months from the day on which I entered Verona to begin work—I made a concluding sketch of the old Broletto of Como, which I drew first for the *Seven Lamps*[2]—I know not how many years ago—and left Italy for this time, having been entirely well and strong every day of my quarter of a year's sojourn there.

"This morning, before breakfast, I was seeing for the first time Luini's Crucifixion,[3] for all religious art qualities the greatest picture south of the Alps—or rather in Europe.

"And just after breakfast I get a telegram from my cousin George[4] announcing that I am Professor of Art—the first—at the University of Oxford.

"Which will give me as much power as I can well use, and would have given pleasure to my poor father, and therefore to me—

[1] *Carlyle's Life in London*, vol. ii. p. 383 (8vo edition).
[2] A slip for *Stones of Venice*: see Vol. IX., Plate V. (p. 174).
[3] On the wall of the screen in the Church of Sta. Maria degli Angioli, "The Passion of Christ"—a picture containing several hundred figures, arranged in two rows.
[4] George Richardson.

Digitized by Google

once—and perhaps may yet give some pleasure to—some one who has given me my worst pain.[1]

"It will make no difference in my general plans about travel, etc. I shall think quietly of it as I drive up towards St. Gothard to-day.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Ever your loving Son,

"J. Ruskin."[2]

"Hospenthal, St. Gothard, 15*th August* 1869.

"My dearest Mother,—Here, in the old Inn you know so well, under the grassy hill you used to be so happy climbing in the morning, I get a letter from my cousin George telling me I am the first professor of art appointed at the English Universities.

"I hope—quietly and patiently, to be of very wide use in this position. I am *but just* ripe for it. I should have committed myself—in some way—had I got it sooner. But now it will enable me to obtain attention, and attention is all that I want to enable me to say what is entirely useful instead of what is merely pretty or entertaining.

"But I shall be home soon now, and will tell you all about it—far too much to write.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. Ruskin."

The creation of the Slade Professorship of Fine Art at Oxford, Ruskin's election to it, and the work to which he set himself, are dealt with in the Introduction to the next volume. He was already on his way home when he heard of the appointment. He would gladly have stayed longer in Italy, but his mother was yearning for his return. At Milan he stayed for a day in order to visit Count Giberto Borromeo, whom he had met at Venice and whom he greatly liked. Then, after crossing the St. Gothard, he spent a day at Thun with Professor Norton, and went to see "Marie of the Giessbach,"[3] who was dying of consumption.[4] But the beauty of the place charmed him as much as ever:—

"Marie," he writes to his mother (August 26), "has just brought me a nice little basket to gather some wild strawberries in, for my

[1] See, again, *Præterita*, iii. ch. iii.
[2] This letter is reprinted from W. G. Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, pp. 266–267.
[3] See Vol. XVIII. p. xliii.
[4] *Letters to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. i. p. 225.

Digitized by Google

dessert. Poor Marie will never gather any more, unless they grow in heaven, which I very much hope they do if I am to live there. Cima da Conegliano always puts them in the grass near his Saints."[1]

"GIESSBACH, 21*st August* 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I do not know when I have enjoyed myself so much as I do in my quiet walks here. After the noise, vice, and uncleanness of Italy, the pure moss and rocks, now in their perfect glow of summer beauty and repose, are intensely soothing to me; and I am so interested in everything by the last three years' work in botany and geology, and especially by my present plans for managing the rainfall. I have been resting in perfect quiet on a sofa of moss, with the great curtain of soft pines, 2000 feet high, drawn behind, between me and the sun (and the Giessbach glittering through it), examining intently for an hour together the rim of the ravines above Brientz, on the opposite side of the lake, and planning where the dykes were to be thrown across, and where the stream was to be led, out of each, and how the drainage of the rain in the fields above was to be stopped.

"I *have* a little too many irons in the fire, as you say, for in the midst of this engineering I was so quiet (thinking), that a large grey grasshopper came to look at me; and then walked on to my coat, and examined that with the greatest attention; and then on to my hand, and examined that, not, since that was impossible, with greater, but with more prolonged care; meantime I was also examining *him*, and his wonderful eyes, and little active legs at his mouth; and grand thighs, striped black, which are his musical instruments, and his little brown ruff falling over the back of his neck. He stayed so long that I got tired and put him down, whereupon he either sang a song or uttered a remonstrance, I don't know which, with both his legs, and jumped away with a whirr—*half* flying.

"I leave on Thursday, but come by Neuchâtel and Dijon as it is shorter. Here is a pretty envelope for you, for the Hôtel de la Cloche, and Acland's lovely letter, and I am, my dearest Mother, ever your most affectionate Son,

"J. RUSKIN."

"GIESSBACH, *Sunday, 22nd August* 1869.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,—I think I never had so exquisite a walk yet in Switzerland as I have had this morning to the country *above* the Giessbach. The path goes up in the shade all the way, through beech woods (very noble trees if there were nothing else to see),

[1] See *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 175).

Digitized by Google

and then into a perfect Paradise of soft knoll and banks of grass, which being all mown now, and yet kept fresh and living by the continual springs (and late rain), is in the very perfectness of grass existence for *walking* on; so smooth, united, mossy, and perfumed, that in the early morning sunshine it was all a green light below, as the sky was a blue light above; and the Giessbach stream comes out of a magnificent ravine beneath these meadows, in one white fall after another, far above those seen in the known fall, and to-day the insects were all so hungry for honey, after the wet days, it was a pleasure to see them feed—there were two great bees, one butterfly, and a little red-backed beastie, neither fly nor beetle, but between the two, all on one purple ball of scabious at once. I was surprised to watch the perfect serenity with which the little butterfly (not *quite* butterfly—more of a golden moth, with a blue light here and there) sucked his fill between the great brown bees, fidgeting about round the ball and pushing the fragile creature out of their way, not angrily, but just as if it had been a leaf of the flower (not that a scabious has leaves like that, but they treated it as if it were a pease-blossom hanging over).

"Then I found some such interesting rocks—just what I wanted for my cleavage question—and, on the whole, though you may say in the lovely little letter I got last night about Chamouni and Mrs. Eisenkraemer—though, as I said, you think now I might as well be at home, I am sure you will be glad I stayed.

"Ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your most affectionate Son,

"J. Ruskin."

"I have a little too many irons in the fire." That had been Ruskin's case for many years past, and was to be so, in increasing measure, for many years to come. He saw already how great would be the demands of his Oxford duties, as he chose to interpret them, and was anxious to save some work from his old accumulations from the impending maelstrom. "I shall give a good two months to my botany," he wrote to his mother (August 19), "when I come home,—first, for fear it gets 'off the boil.'" Then he purposed writing a companion essay to *The Queen of the Air* on the Myths of Apollo. But time did not suffice. The botany went "off the boil" until 1875, when the first part of *Proserpina* appeared, and the essay on Apollo never got itself written, though his Oxford lectures contained occasional references to Apolline myths.[1] If the reader will look on to the

[1] See, for instance, *Lectures on Art*, §§ 151–157 (Vol. XX.).

Digitized by Google

account in the next volume of the immense pains which Ruskin took in preparing his Oxford work, no surprise will be felt at the abandonment of these other plans. The wonder is that Ruskin managed to do everything that he did in the time. He did not return from the Continent till the end of August, 1869; his Inaugural Lectures at Oxford began on February 8, 1870. The five intervening months were spent at Denmark Hill in unceasing work, with occasional visits to Oxford. But in December and January he published papers in the *Geological Magazine* (reserved for a later volume); in December he gave at Woolwich the lecture on "The Future of England," which was included in the later editions of *The Crown of Wild Olive;* and on February 4 he gave at the Royal Institution the lecture on Verona, which stands last in the present volume. He packed close into it the thoughts and observations made during the summer of 1869, and even so the material overflowed, as in the case of Abbeville, into an exhibition, with a printed catalogue.

The minor pieces collected in this volume have been sufficiently discussed in foregoing pages; it remains to give some further notes upon the longer writings, *The Cestus of Aglaia* and *The Queen of the Air.*

"THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA"

The papers entitled *The Cestus of Aglaia* are here, for the first time, published together in their entirety. A sub-title—"Nine Papers on the Laws of Art"—would indicate their general drift, and the titles supplied to the chapters give an outline of their contents. The author's object was, as he says, to define "some of the simplest laws which are binding on Art practice and judgment" (§ 6, p. 57)—laws, "for present practice of Art in our schools, which may be admitted, if not with absolute, at least with a sufficient consent, by leading artists" (§ 87, p. 135). The Prefatory chapter and part of chapter i. illustrate the desirability of finding and keeping such laws; and he then discusses in turn the relation of pure outline to suggestion of shade (ch. i.); the functions of Modesty, Patience, and speed in art (chs. ii.–iv.); the besetting dangers of the practice of etching (ch. v.); the vice of Liberty, and contrary virtue, Continence, in art (ch. vi.); the limits of material (ch. vii.); the relation between public and private art (ch. viii.); and the powers and scope of various kinds of engraving (ch. ix.). He had intended, in a further paper, to

Digitized by Google

continue the subject by discussing the technical laws of that branch of art (see p. 159); but the series was not continued, and the subject was afterwards treated elsewhere—in his Oxford course of lectures published under the title *Ariadne Florentina.*

To this earlier, as to that later, discussion Ruskin gave a title with classical associations. He called these essays on the Laws of Art "The Cestus of Aglaia"; that is, "The Girdle of the Grace" (§ 58, p. 107). Aglaia, as he has explained (Vol. XVII. pp. 224 *n.*, 226), was the personification of Grace, "always gladdening, and true wife of Vulcan, or Labour." He chose the title from the fourteenth book of the *Iliad*, where Aphrodite (into whom the conception of Aglaia merges[1]) presents to Hera her cestus, "in which all things are wrought" (see below, p. 49 *n.*). And, in so choosing his title, he had, as he says (p. 65), a double thought. It was "partly in memory of these outcast fancies of the great masters"—those fancies, that is, in which men of old time had connected their own powers and activities with spiritual forces; and thus Ruskin's first thought was to express in his title his abiding, and ever strengthening, conviction of the spiritual power of art. But, secondly, he intended by the title to indicate that the virtues which the Greeks personified, or included, in their conception of Grace were themselves the virtues of fine art. The arts, he meant in the first place, only reach their highest power when the girdle of Grace confines their activities and directs their choice. And then, further—with thoughts of Chaucer and of Spenser here mingling in his mind—he drew out his Laws of Art from the specific virtues which might be conceived as giving to the Cestus of Aglaia its power and charm. Thus of Modesty, he says (p. 72), that "her fingers are among the deftest in laying the ground-threads of Aglaia's Cestus"—that Modestia who is

> "as polisht yvory
> Which cunning craftesman hand hath overlayd
> With fayre vermilion on pure castory."[2]

Sometimes he discusses the links in the Cestus itself; at others, he makes his point by examining opponent points—as when he contrasts the inclination of art towards what is dark or foul (p. 107) with the power of Aglaia who is always bright and gladdening; and so, too, in discussing "that evil liberty" which is the opposite of Continence, the golden clasp of Aglaia's Cestus (p. 119).

[1] See *Munera Pulveris*, § 101 (Vol. XVII. p. 226).
[2] See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 393).

Digitized by Google

The Cestus of Aglaia has thus a consistent thread; but it is written desultorily, as the author says (p. 135), and in large part the thought is not so clear that he who runs may read it. In the matter of style, there is a marked transition between the first six chapters, which were written at one time, and the last three, which were written at another time and in a more obvious manner. It is to the earlier chapters that the description of their style given in *The Queen of the Air* (§ 134, p. 408) applies. In writing them, Ruskin "said all that came into his head for his own pleasure." A great deal came into his head. "I am almost sick and giddy (though perfectly well)," he said himself, "with the quantity of things in my head—trains of thought beginning and branching to infinity, crossing each other, and all tempting and wanting to be worked out."[1] It is not always easy to follow the criss-cross of Ruskin's thoughts when he writes with running pen whatever comes into his head, and the editors have therefore thought that elucidatory notes would not be out of place (*e.g.*, on pp. 64, 87). These same chapters contain not only passages which are thus very characteristic of the working of Ruskin's mind, but others also which are among the most eloquent and felicitous to be found in his writings. The praise of the railway engine (p. 61) is a case in point, though it is little known. The description of the fly as a type of liberty (p. 123) is another. The papers on *The Cestus of Aglaia* were, as we have seen, not completed. Ruskin had to break them off in order to take a much needed holiday;[2] and the small response which the papers had met with did not encourage him to resume them. His idea had been to draw up Laws of Art in co-operation with other teachers and artists (pp. 58, 70); but no answer came to his invitation (p. 134). This is, perhaps, not altogether to be wondered at. Just as it is possible to understand the bewilderment of business men when invited to govern their commercial transactions by reference to Archytas and the Gran Nemico,[3] so it is not difficult to believe that artists or students, into whose hands the *Art Journal* may have fallen, may have been put off from taking up the author's more practical points by some puzzlement over Homer's Aglaia and Chaucer's hill of sand and the Grison Grey. The author confessed that he himself was entangled in "the web of these old enigmas" (p. 87).

However this may have been, *The Cestus of Aglaia* was not completed, nor did Ruskin republish the papers in their original form,

[1] This is the concluding sentence of the letter to his mother of August 8, 1869, given above (p. liv.).
[2] See Vol. XVIII. p. xxxvi.
[3] See Vol. XVII. p. lxxxii.

Digitized by Google

though he detached passages from them for use elsewhere. It is only in this complete edition of his works that an opportunity has arrived for reprinting the original papers fully. The treatment of the *text* is explained in the Bibliographical Note (below, p. 45). The *manuscript* of portions of the papers has been collated for this edition. That of chapter ii., written on twelve sheets of ruled white quarto paper and (at the end) on one sheet of ruled blue foolscap (this latter showing hardly any corrections, and perhaps representing a second, fair, copy), is in the possession of Mr. William Ward. It bears out what the author says of the style, being written *currente calamo*, and with many alterations made as he went along. A page is here given in *facsimile* (p. 72), and an interesting passage is added in a footnote (p. 75). The manuscript of chapters vii., viii., and ix. is in the MS. book which contains also *The Ethics of the Dust* and the lecture on "War" (used in *The Crown of Wild Olive*). This book is in Mr. Allen's possession. The MS. of these later chapters for the *Cestus* shows very few erasures or variations from the printed text.

"THE QUEEN OF THE AIR"

In *The Queen of the Air* Ruskin took up the studies in Greek mythology which had already begun to fascinate him when he was writing the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*.[1] The fascination had grown gradually upon him, as he saw ever deeper meanings in the myths, and recognised more and more fully a religious sincerity behind them. It is interesting to contrast the subtle analysis in this volume, in the case of the myths of Æolus,[2] of what, some years before (1854), he had half dismissed as "paltry fables"; and, so in re-reading at a later date the second volume of *Modern Painters* (1845), where he had said that "no spirit power was in the vision" of the Greek god of battle, he noted the correction in *The Queen of the Air* of that "false bias."[3] The present study of the Greek myths of Athena is among the most characteristic of Ruskin's books, and contains some of his most poignant passages—passages which, as Carlyle said,[4] go into the heart like arrows. Also it abounds in flashes of insight. The book,

[1] See Vol. VII. p. lxii.
[2] See §§ 19–30, pp. 310–327; with which contrast *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 78 (Vol. XII. p. 103).
[3] Vol. IV. p. 390 and *n*.
[4] See above, p. lviii.

Digitized by Google

says a friend of Ruskin's, who in another art has sometimes sought in these late days to touch the beautiful mythology of Greece, "is one of the most delightfully poetic treatises upon Greek myth as connected with cloud and storm ever penned. No one else could have touched the subject with so delicate a hand. In this little book Ruskin has set forth his pantheism, and displayed his consummate understanding of that side of the Greek temperament which was in sympathy with mountains, clouds, and streams. It would seem to have been inspired by Helios and Artemis, by Kore and Demeter; the pen with which he wrote it diffuses the many tints of Iris' bow into far-reaching words, turning sensitive visions into realities, and burning thoughts into visible flames."[1] But the book is discursive and difficult, and as Ruskin supplied no detailed list of contents, a short summary is added in this edition (see below, p. 421). This may be acceptable to some readers, while it will help to the better understanding of the book in relation to the moods and circumstances in which it was written. It is divided into Lectures, and includes a good many pages which were so delivered, but for the rest the division into lectures is only a literary form. A glance at the abstract of contents will at once show one characteristic of *The Queen of the Air*—namely, its discursiveness. It is only the first lecture which keeps with any closeness to the title of the book. The link with the Greek myths of Athena is slight in the second lecture, and in the third it hardly exists at all. Such connexion as there is comes not so much from any indications in Greek mythology or art as from a personification in Ruskin's mind. At this time he formed an ideal conception of Athena, and attributed to her guidance or inspiration whatever interests, thoughts, schemes, and hopes were occupying his mind, just as presently he did with "St. Ursula" or "St. George." We see, then, in the discursive contents of this book a reflection of the course of his thoughts and doings, as they have been traced in this Introduction. He had planned a "concentration on antiquities" (p. xliv.), and at the beginning, and at the end, of the book his studies in Greek art and mythology are embodied. But the concentration did not take place. He had materials for a treatise on the myths of Apollo (§ 44[2]); he proposed to collect and complete the studies, which he had begun in the last volume of *Modern Painters*, of the Pegasean and Gorgonian legends (§ 30); he meant "to work

[1] "Ruskin as I knew Him," by Sir W. B. Richmond, K.C.B., R.A., in *St. George*, October 1902, vol. v. p. 292.
[2] And see above, p. lxi.

Digitized by Google

out thoroughly by itself" the myth of Sisyphus (§ 29); and he wished to prepare an essay on the ethical nature of the Homeric poems in relation to mythology (§ 17). But, so far as the study of Greek mythology went, the book remained a fragment; a collection, he calls it, of "desultory memoranda on a most noble subject" (Preface, p. 291). He diverged from Homer and Hesiod to his studies in botany, his principles of Political Economy, his suggestions for dealing with the unemployed. The actual contents of the book were, as will be seen from the Bibliographical Note (p. 283), brought together from various sources. It should be remembered, further, that the book was not closely revised, in its final stages, by Ruskin. He entrusted the work to Professor Norton, but the suggestions of his friend were not encouragingly received, and in the end, we are told, "the volume appeared without any proper revision."[1]

In considering *The Queen of the Air* as a contribution to the study of Greek mythology, the reader should remember the date at which it was written. The views of the philological school, headed by Max Müller, were then in the ascendant. "Comparative Mythology," as the philological school understood the term, consisted of a comparison of the roots of words; mythology was "a disease of language," and the common origin of all the myths was to be found in natural, and especially in solar, phenomena. This is the doctrine to which, by implication, Ruskin assented; indeed he expressly refers, in his Preface (p. 292), to "the splendid investigation of recent philologists," and "it is the task of the Philologists," he says (§ 1, p. 296), "to account for the errors of antiquity." Another school has, since Ruskin wrote, won much acceptance, and in this country has been widely popularised by the writings of Mr. Andrew Lang. This school pursues the methods of Comparative Anthropology, studies the beliefs and legends of contemporary or recent savagedom, and finds the origin of Greek (as of other) myths in the corresponding fancies of savage ancestors, from whom the Greeks of the civilised age inherited ideas no worthier, or in any essential respect other, than those of Bushmen and Red Indians.

In reading Ruskin's book it is necessary to bear this later view in mind; for, if we accept it, many corrections and reservations, and some refutations, would become necessary. Ruskin says, for instance, in one of his mythological essays, that the legend of Arachne "at

[1] Professor C. E. Norton's Preface to the "Brantwood" (American) edition of *The Queen of the Air*, p. x.; and see the *Letters to Norton*, vol. i. p. 213.

Digitized by Google

first sight, like many other stories of the kind, seems not only degrading, but meaningless; the old mythologists, however, always made their best fables rough on the outside";[1] and he goes on to suggest an intention therein on their part. But according to the anthropological school, the degrading element in Greek mythology was a survival from savagery, and later poets or philosophers sought to rationalise it away. For instance, in another essay, Ruskin finds a moral significance in the ant-born myrmidons;[2] the anthropological school explains such myths as survivals from animal-worship and from the claim of some savage tribe to be descended from the object of the worship. If these theories be correct, much of Ruskin's interpretation must be dismissed as unscientific. But there are important distinctions to be made. Ruskin did not profess to be discussing the origins of myths. It is a study of the greatest importance, and in some measure its results must colour all other studies in mythology. In some measure, but not altogether. To discover the origin of any phase of life is not the same thing as to explain that phase. It makes very little contribution to the study of Shakespeare to announce that the Elizabethan drama was developed from morality and miracle plays; the beating of the savage tom-tom throws little light on the symphonies of Beethoven; nor can Raphael be interpreted by the scratched lines of a reindeer on the rock. What Ruskin is occupied with in this book is the meaning of myths, as they had been refined by the poets and the philosophers, or as they were believed, not by the savage ancestors of the Greeks, but by the Greeks for whom Homer and Pindar wrote. He did not concern himself, except incidentally (§ 72), with the lower phases of mythology. "The great question in reading a story is always," he says, "not what wild hunter dreamed, or what childish race first dreaded it; but what wise man first perfectly told, and what strong people first perfectly lived by it" (§ 7, p. 301). And so, in "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 17, he says, "What you have to discern, in any of the myths that have long dwelt in human thought, is not, what fact they represented, but what colour they were intended to give to it." It is true, however, that Ruskin accepted, as we have seen, a theory of the origin of myths which, according to the anthropological school, is erroneous, and which in any case is probably pushed too far. But here it should be remembered that there is a certain amount of common ground. No one disputes that many myths arose from the personification of natural phenomena, or that the poets and philosophers of

[1] "The Story of Arachne," § 20, in Vol. XX.
[2] See "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 17, in Vol. XX.

Digitized by Google

Greece refined upon the earlier imaginations of the people. There must, therefore, remain, on any theory, a wide field for ingenuity and sympathetic imagination to work upon in the interpretation of the myths of an educated people. Ruskin claimed, and not without reason, that his long study of the clouds and fields and rocks gave him an opportunity of entering sympathetically into the interpretation of nature-myths and nature-poets.[1] Mythology is like romance; it is an expression of wonder. In some ways no one was better able than Ruskin, in whom the eyes of wonder were never closed, to enter into the visions and thoughts of the early children of men. On the other hand, the ingenuity of his mind, which so often worked (to use a phrase of his own) "like a Virgilian simile, many thoughts in one,"[2] may not always have been a sound interpreter of less fanciful writers, or have served to keep him from pushing a favourite idea too far. A typical instance of his ingenuity, which readers are likely to consider illuminative or far-fetched according to their conceptions of the Homeric spirit, will be found in § 19 (see the note thereon, p. 311). After all, there must inevitably be much that is arbitrary in the interpretation of myths. There was no fixed code of mythology, and no theories of the origin of myths can ever solve the later developments of them.

> "Vain mortals imagine that gods like themselves are begotten,
> With human sensations and voice and corporeal members."[3]

So also each poet made his myth largely in accordance with his own fancy; and each interpreter of the poetical mythology is apt to read his own thoughts into it. No one, says Ruskin, can in such matters be absolutely right (Preface, p. 291); and again, there are pieces of enigmatical teaching which "may evidently mean just what we like" (*Cestus of Aglaia*, p. 84). What Ruskin liked the myths of Athena to mean may not always be supportable by evidence, and in some cases the evidence he cites is of doubtful value. He was given to pressing into his service all words that suited (as, for instance, when he finds a mythical significance in the application of the common epithet, cold, to a particular mountain top, § 26); and he was particularly arbitrary in collecting his illustrative passages from authors of all dates, even dovetailing in with a passage, it

[1] Compare Vol. VII. p. lxiii.
[2] *Love's Meinie*, § 44.
[3] Xenophanes of Colophon (translated in *Supernatural Religion*, vol. i. p. 76).

Digitized by Google

may be, from Homer another from some obscure grammarian or fabulist of a thousand years later (§ 23); but the thoughts, guesses, or fancies of so acute and ingenious a mind can seldom fail to be suggestive. Ruskin speaks elsewhere (below, p. 174) of the visions of the poets expressing themselves "tremulously, as far-off lights of heaven through terrestrial air"; he himself had peculiarly the gift of catching such lights, and making them flash forth their many-coloured message. Often, no doubt, the message may be his, rather than theirs; but it is the privilege of any noble art or literature to have many meanings for many minds, and Ruskin's *Queen of the Air* will, to sympathetic readers, often make a passage in the old poems, or some type in the old art, yet more "beautiful with haunting thought" (§ 108). And so the reader is not unlikely to be of the same opinion with Carlyle, whose letter to Ruskin about the book was as follows:—

"CHELSEA, *August* 17, 1869.

"DEAR RUSKIN,—Your excellent, kind, and loving little note from Vevey reached me, but nothing since, not even precise news at second-hand, which I have much desired. The blame of my not answering and inciting was not mine, but that of my poor rebellious right hand, which oftenest refuses altogether to do any writing for me that can be read; having already done too much, it probably thinks! I did practically want a little thing of you at *Baireuth*, if you should pause there: *Photographs*—two portraits of Wilhelmina which I had heard of—but the *right hand* mumbled always, 'You *can* do without them, you *know!*' and at length I lazily assented.

"What I wish now is to know if you are at home, and to see you instantly, if so. *Instantly!* For I am not unlikely to be off in a few days (by *Steamer some* whither) and again miss you. Come, I beg, *quam primum!*

"Last week I got your *Queen of the Air* and read it. Euge! Euge! No such Book have I met with for long years past. The one soul now in the world who seems to feel as I do on the highest matters, and speaks *mir aus dem Herzen* exactly what I wanted to hear! As to the natural history of those old Myths, I remained here and there a little uncertain, but as to the meanings you put into them, never anywhere. All these things I not only 'agree' with, but would use Thor's Hammer, if I had it, to enforce and put in action on this rotten world. Well done, well done! and pluck up a heart, and continue again and again. And don't say 'most great thoughts are dressed *in shrouds:*'[1] many, many are the Phœbus Apollo celestial arrows you still have to shoot into the foul Pythons and poisonous abominable Megatheriums and Plesiosaurians that go staggering about, large as cathedrals, in our sunk Epoch again.

[1] A reference to § 17: see below, p. 309.

Digitized by Google

"I have had a great deal to do with *insomnia*, etc., etc., since that last Wednesday evening; come back, I tell you, while it is still time. With kind regards to the dear old Mother,

"Yours ever,

"T. CARLYLE."

The pages on Greek art which conclude *The Queen of the Air*—drawing out from the study of a single coin, the Hercules of Camarina, the characteristics of Greek art—are a most characteristic discourse: so suggestive and penetrating that one cannot but regret the abandonment by Ruskin of other half-completed studies in the same sort. Some of these are printed as an appendix to Volume XX. The present lecture should be read in connexion with the further analysis of the same subject in *Aratra Pentelici*, contained also in the next volume. *The Queen of the Air* was a favourite book with its author. "It is the best I ever wrote," he said to Miss Beever—"the last which I took thorough loving pains with, and the first which I did with full knowledge of sorrow." And so again, to the same correspondent, "It pleases me especially that you have read *The Queen of the Air*. As far as I know, myself, of my books, it is the most useful and careful piece I have done."[1] It passed through several editions (being now in its 26th thousand), but it was never revised by Ruskin, though Mr. Faunthorpe (of Whitelands College) who passed the sheets of a new edition through the press in 1883, incorporated a few notes from the author's copy and made some trivial alterations in the text. There are, therefore, comparatively few variations in the *text* to notice (see Bibliographical Note, p. 286). No manuscript of the book is known to the editors, except the author's first draft of several pages of Lecture i., which is at Brantwood, in a note-book containing also portions of a catalogue of Ruskin's collection of minerals. A page of this MS. is given in *facsimile* (p. 297).

With regard to the *text* and *manuscript* of the other writings included in this volume, the paper on "Sir Joshua and Holbein" is reprinted from the *Cornhill Magazine*, and there are no variations of text to record. It was, as already explained, a chapter crowded out from *Modern Painters*. The MS. (on fourteen pages of blue foolscap)—as also the proof sheets and the revise of the paper—is in Mr. Allen's possession. On the back of one sheet of the MS. is an early draft of a passage upon the bud, in the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*. The

[1] *Hortus Inclusus*, pp. 1, 122 (ed. 1902); reprinted in a later volume of this edition.

Digitized by Google

MS. was collated for this edition, and a few passages are here added from it (pp. 9, 12). A *facsimile* of a page of the MS. is also given (between pp. 16, 17).

Of *The Study of Architecture* (reprinted from the *Proceedings* of the Institute), no MS. is known to the editors.

The treatment of the *text* of *The Cestus of Aglaia* has been already explained, and particulars of the manuscript have been given.

The manuscripts of the lectures on "National Art and National Ethics" and on "Modern Art" (here printed for the first time) are at Brantwood. They are in the hand of Ruskin's servant, Crawley, with corrections and additions in Ruskin's own.

The manuscript of the lecture on "The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme" is in the possession of Mr. Wedderburn, to whom Ruskin gave it. Some of it is in the hand of Crawley, and a small portion of it is in that of Mrs. Severn; but the greater part is in Ruskin's own hand. Here and there the MS. is imperfect; in such places the passages are supplied from a *verbatim* note of the lecture as delivered, copies of which are in possession of the editors.

The manuscript of "Verona and its Rivers" is at Brantwood. It is largely Crawley's copy, corrected by the author.

The *Illustrations*, like the literary contents of this volume, are diversified in character.

The *frontispiece*—a reproduction of Ruskin's copy of a St. Catherine by Luini—is chosen from a painter whose pre-eminence he often proclaims in this volume and elsewhere in his books. "Of Luini," he asks in *The Cestus of Aglaia* (§ 54), "what do the English public yet so much as care to know?" The revelation of Luini to the English public was one of the works on which Ruskin prided himself.[1] Luini, he says, again in *The Cestus*,[2] "is, perhaps, the best central type of the highly trained Italian painter . . . every touch he lays is eternal, every thought he conceives is beautiful and pure: his hand moves always in radiance of blessing." So, in the lecture on "Flamboyant Architecture," Luini is taken as an example of "the central Italian school,"[3] and this copy from his St. Catherine was shown as likely to convey "a better impression than an ordinary engraving could of a work in itself so beautiful that I do not fear but that you will find

[1] Epilogue of 1883 to the second volume of *Modern Painters*, § 13 (Vol. IV. p. 355); and compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 46.

[2] § 83 (below, pp. 130–131).

[3] Compare also *Lectures on Art*, §§ 73, 92; *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 71, 72; and *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iii. § 46.

Digitized by Google

some reflex of its true character, even in this its shadow" (p. 248). And so, again, in the lecture on Verona, Luini is included among the artists representative of "the Age of the Masters" (p. 443).

The appreciation of Luini was one of the main tasks which Ruskin had set himself in the summer of 1862. He had, as already stated,[1] undertaken to report to the Arundel Society on the artist's frescoes at Milan and in neighbouring places, and in subsequent years the Society published chromo-lithographs of several of them.[2] Ruskin's own work was concentrated on the frescoes in San Maurizio (or, Monastero Maggiore); the copy here reproduced is of the figure of St. Catherine, which is on the right of the altar in the third chapel (to the right of the high altar). Ruskin reported the progress of his work in letters to his father:—

> "MILAN, *June* 18.—I never saw anything so beautiful in sacred art as Luini's Christs in St. Maurizio here, or the remnants of them at least; for after the battle of Magenta the church was made a military hospital, and you can fancy what became of the frescoes."
>
> "*June* 16.—I am better, and settled to Luini's frescoes. It is not oppressively warm anywhere, and in the church where I work all is exactly right—no draughts—no heat—no damp—and no flies. The frescoes as grand as can be, and rapidly perishing from the grossest ill-usage. Nails have been driven into the finest faces, to fasten up bed-curtains for the wounded after Magenta. Two rooms, the size of our drawing-room, would have done as well, but the Italians couldn't, it seems, provide so much."
>
> "*June* 29.—I think I see my way now with some little distinctness. St. Catherine promises well, and seems likely to be painted and dressed in less than three weeks."
>
> "*July* 25.—I have been examining St. Catherine from head to foot, and she's coming so nice that I'm in no mind to spoil her or leave her unfinished for a day more or less. There's a corner of one of her lips which will take a day yet, and two or three curls of hair which will take another; then there's a little finger and bit of back of hand; and some of her gold brocade wants retouching."
>
> "MORNEX, *September* 14.—I am truly glad you like St. Catherine. I was entirely certain you *would have* liked her, had I got her finished; but the head is so infinitely inferior to what I meant it to be, the hot weather rendering it impossible to work delicately enough, that I feared it would seem coarse and valueless. The bit

[1] Vol. XVII. p. liii.

[2] The drawings, from which the chromo-lithographs were executed, are in the National Gallery.

Digitized by Google

of wheel and drapery at the bottom is tolerably good (note how the weight of wheel pulls her dress straight from her knee)—that is, tolerably like; the right hand is carefully drawn in contour, and the little finger in it pretty well painted and like; the crown, and the chain over her left shoulder, are well painted (laid in at once and never touched afterwards), and there is a great deal of good work, all but lost and hidden, in the hair; a feeling of it coming through, so also in the mouth. Great part of the time and labour were spent in measuring and placing the curls of the hair; the place of every touch is of importance in the expression. There is some decisive painting in the red drapery with golden lyres on it. The rest is all mess and makeshift."

Ruskin, it will be remembered,[1] had Burne-Jones with him at Milan in 1862, and the young painter was also pressed into the service of copying Luini's frescoes in San Maurizio:—

"I am drawing from a fresco," wrote Burne-Jones, "that has never been seen since the day it was painted, in jet darkness, in a chapel where candlesticks, paper flowers, and wooden dolls abound freely. Ruskin, by treacherous smiles and winning courtesies and delicate tips, has wheedled the very candlesticks off the altar for my use, and the saint's table and his everything that was his, and I draw every day now by the light of eight altar candles; also a fat man stands at the door and says the church is shut if anybody comes, and when the priest himself put his head in, the fat man said, 'Hush—sh—sh—sh!' and frightened poor priest away."

Burne-Jones soon caught Ruskin's enthusiasm for Luini, and some years later advised a friend who was travelling in Italy to "hunt him out everywhere. Never were any faces so perfect; for they are perfect like Greek ones, and have fourteen hundred years of tenderness and pity added."[2]

Seven years later, in the tour of 1869 which has been described in this Introduction, Ruskin again saw the fresco, as he relates in a letter to his mother:—

"MILAN, *May* 7.—I went to see my St. Catherine directly, and found her half destroyed in the seven years that have passed since. They have had masons at work, making a new door, and let them

[1] See Vol. XVII. p. lxiii.
[2] *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. i. p. 248; vol. ii. p. 66.

Digitized by Google

put their ladders or anything else against the fresco—as if it were an outside wall—and there is nearly an end of St. Catherine and of the beautiful Christ that was opposite her. So much for young Italy. . . .

"I was better satisfied than I expected to be, very much with my own copy, when I saw the original again. But I am overpowered with the sense of the intolerable misery and bestiality of the people round me, having capacity of all good, and destroyed by their base government."

The copy is in water-colour,[1] life-size, and is painted on several pieces of paper, of different shapes and sizes, which Ruskin afterwards joined together. There are some differences also of tone; the plate here has been slightly touched in order to bring the work better together. The copy was presented by Ruskin to his drawing school at Oxford, where it hangs in the centre of the principal alcove.

The plates introduced into the paper on "Sir Joshua and Holbein" are photogravures from works described in the text. Plate I. is from the engraving by William Sharp (1749–1824) of Reynolds's "Holy Family." The picture itself is unfortunately a wreck, and is no longer exhibited at the National Gallery. Plate II. is a photogravure from the portrait of George Gyzen by Holbein in the Berlin Gallery (see p. 10). Plate III. is from the "Meyer" Madonna in the Dresden Gallery; the original picture by Holbein is at Darmstadt, but it is the Dresden picture which Ruskin describes (p. 13). The figures of St. Barbara and St. Elizabeth, reproduced in Plate IV., are in the Munich Gallery, where they are ascribed to the elder Holbein, but Ruskin believed them to be the work of the younger (p. 14).

In *The Cestus of Aglaia* a plate (V.) of Dürer's "Cannon" is included, as this is a work to which Ruskin frequently refers to illustrate various points in the art of engraving (see p. 113 *n.*).

In the lecture on *Modern Art* Ruskin describes two designs by Burne-Jones—"Love and Alcestis" (Plate VI.) and "The Two Wives of Jason" (Plate VII.). The drawings are in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford, which is rich also in possessing other drawings by Burne-Jones—"quite the most precious gift," said Ruskin, "not excepting even the Loire series of Turners, in the ratified acceptance of which my University has honoured with some fixed memorial the aims

[1] For a note on the colour of the mantle, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 226.

Digitized by Google

of her first Art-Teacher."[1] The designs here reproduced are beginnings in colour.

The illustrations given in the lecture on Abbeville are six in number. Five of them are from Ruskin's drawings. Plate VIII. is of the Place de l'Amiral Courbet at Abbeville—the Market Place, Ruskin calls it, of Abbeville, with St. Vulfran seen over the houses at the end. The drawing, which is in pencil (20 × 14), is No. 61 in the Reference Series at Oxford, and is noticed in Ruskin's Catalogue of that collection (Vol. XX.); it was also No. 43 in the exhibition shown in connexion with the Abbeville lecture (see below, p. 276). It is perhaps the most beautiful of all his drawings in this sort; our reproduction, being necessarily reduced in scale, gives only a partial idea of the wealth of detail which the artist put into the work, but which nevertheless does not interfere with the unity of the composition. It appears from his diary that this drawing was begun on September 10, and not finished on October 12.

The next plate (IX.) is a steel-engraving by J. C. Armytage, which Ruskin had prepared, perhaps for his intended *Stones of Abbeville*, but did not publish. The drawing from which the engraving was done was No. 41 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue (p. 276). The subject is St. Vulfran from the east, showing also the old houses of the Pont d'Amour; a more finished drawing from the same point of view is reproduced by photogravure in an earlier volume (Vol. II. p. 398).

Plate XI. shows details from the west front of St. Vulfran. The drawing, which is in wash (10 × 8), is at Herne Hill.

Plate XII. shows the southern door of the west porch of St. Vulfran. The drawing was apparently No. 48 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue. It is now No. 95 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). It is in pencil and wash (18 × 12).

Plate XIII. shows a portion of the west front of Rouen Cathedral. It is from a photograph taken for Ruskin by Arthur Burgess; an enlargement from the photograph was No. 49 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue (see p. 277).

The other plate (X.), illustrating the Abbeville lecture, is from a photograph (by Miss Cordelia Marshall, of Skelwith Fold) of a portrait by Titian of the Doge Andrea Gritti. Ruskin bought the picture from the Rev. Gilbert Elliot (Dean of Bristol) for £1000, and it is at Brantwood. He showed it on the occasion of the Abbeville lecture (No. 1 in the Catalogue), and referred to it in the text

[1] *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism* (1878).

Digitized by Google

(pp. 248, 269). The portrait shows the Doge in a mood less stern, and with less length of nose, than appear in the portrait of the same sitter in the Czernin Gallery at Vienna.[1] A description of the picture by Ruskin's friend, Mr. Tyrwhitt, is here subjoined:—

"The great portrait of the Doge Andrea Gritti, in Professor Ruskin's possession, is as good and as accessible an instance of perfect work in detail, perfectly carried out, as can be wished for. *Perfectly* it is worked out, in this sense: because the Doge, or rather Andrea Gritti the Doge, strikes one at the first glance; there is nothing in the magnificent dress to which the Doge is not superior,—he dignifies his fine clothes, and not they him, although they are finished to absolute completeness and rightness. . . . No person with education, feeling, or soul above buttons can help seeing how great is the art-power which is shown in that accurate finish of the splendid dress, which never for a moment diverts any attention from the stout Lord of the Adriatic. There is no mistaking his fine-cut Cœur-de-Lion type of face, his wide-opened blue eye of good nature and command, his sharply chiselled mouth of action, thick bull-neck of strength, and soft beard and hair of high blood. All this is written down in colour and subtle form for all men to see; but Titian's work was not done when it was written. On the contrary, every line of woven gold in the embroidered cloak plays and reflects light in exactly the right place, as the cunning pattern undulates over its folds. The yellow paint looks exactly like actual gold, so artfully is its tint changed from darker to lighter in each fold of the stuff. It is all separate stripes; and the tint has been changed with methodical exactness in every one, so that the folds of the dress are pointed out by the waving of its pattern. In short, Titian puts the gold work on the Doge's coat of state for exactly the same reason as the Doge put that coat on his body—as a proper accessory, befitting him, and worthy of his office, and requiring proper treatment and care in its subordinate place."[2]

The first of the illustrations to *The Queen of the Air* (Plate XIV.) shows Athena as she appears on a statue found at Herculaneum. The photogravure is reduced from a large drawing of the statue. It is at Brantwood among other diagrams and enlargements, and was probably prepared by one of Ruskin's assistants for exhibition at the lecture on Athena.

The Delphic Apollo (Plate XV.) is reproduced in a woodcut by Mr. Heinrich Uhlrich, an engraver commended by Ruskin, from a drawing on a hydria in the Vatican. It is described by Ruskin in the text (see § 39, and the note there given).

[1] Reproduced at p. 73 of Georg Gronau's *Titian* (1904).

[2] *A Handbook of Pictorial Art*, by the Rev. R. St. John Tyrwhitt, pp. 204–205 (1875 edition).

Digitized by Google

The subject of the next plate (XVI.) is described in the same part of the text (§ 39). The designs of the Chariot of Apollo (sunrise) and of Athena with Hermes (morning breeze and cloud) are from an amphora in the Louvre. The woodcuts here given (also by Mr. Uhlrich) are reduced from large drawings at Brantwood; doubtless, they also were shown at Ruskin's lecture.

Plate XVII. illustrates the botanical portion of *The Queen of the Air*. It is a photogravure from a drawing by Ruskin of the Erba della Madonna (see § 87, p. 377). The drawing—in pencil ($7 \times 4\frac{3}{4}$)—is No. 19 in the Educational Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.).

In the plate of coins (XVIII.) the centre-piece is the Hercules of Camarina (II. C. 17), discussed by Ruskin in the text (§§ 161 *seq.*). The other coins are (above) the two sides of a coin of Tarentum;[1] on the obverse, is a Tarentine horseman; on the reverse, Taras (the mythical founder of the city) on a dolphin. Ruskin refers to "the dolphin of Tarentum" in *The Study of Architecture* (below, p. 22); and describes the two sides of the coin in *The Cestus of Aglaia* (p. 68). The coin was the subject also of an intended lecture, some notes for which are printed in Vol. XX. Below, on the same plate, is (right) a head of Hera on a coin of Argos (III. B. 36 in the exhibition of electrotypes at the British Museum). The head is said to have been copied from the famous statue of Hera at Argos by Polycleitus. Another head of Hera from an Argive coin is shown on Plate XVIII. in *Aratra Pentelici;* but the "Juno of Argos" referred to in this volume (*Queen of the Air*, § 167) appears rather to be head here given. The remaining head on Plate XVIII. is of Nike, from a coin of the Lucanian Heraclea (III. C. 11 in the British Museum). The coin is referred to in some of Ruskin's notes as characteristic of Greek types; the background is formed by the ægis, with a border of snakes. All the coins on this plate are enlarged to twice their diameter.

The illustrations to "Verona and its Rivers" are all from drawings by Ruskin, made for the most part on the spot in 1869.

Plate XIX. shows a niche on the tomb of Can Signorio. The drawing, here reproduced by chromo-lithography, is in pencil and colour (15×6), and is at Brantwood.

Plate XX. shows the market-place (Piazza d'Erbe). This is from a drawing of 1841 in Ruskin's earlier manner. It is No. 42 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 457), and now No. 62 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The drawing is in pencil and wash (19×13).

[1] It may be seen in the exhibition of electrotypes at the British Museum (III. C. 10).

Digitized by Google

Plate XXI. is a study of a capital at Verona. The drawing, which is in pencil and wash on buff paper, is in the collection of Mr. T. F. Taylor.

Plate XXII. shows the upper part of the Tomb of Can Signorio. The drawing, which is in body-colour (20 × 14), is at Brantwood. It was made in 1869, and was No. 32 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 455).

Plate XXIII. shows the Tomb of Can Grande, and is from a photograph combining two of Ruskin's drawings at Oxford—No. 57 in the Reference Series, with details of the sarcophagus added from No. 77 in the Educational Series. The former drawing was probably No. 22 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 454), and Ruskin mentions that the sarcophagus was unfinished; it is in pencil (20 × 13).

Plate XXIV. includes two studies of detail from the same sarcophagus, which Ruskin in the "Verona" Catalogue (No. 24, p. 454) called "The Two Dogs." One is the heraldic dog beside the Madonna of the Annunciation; the other, Can Grande himself, at the battle of Vicenza. The first, in water-colour (7½ × 8½), is in the possession of Mr. T. F. Taylor, the latter (in pencil) is at Brantwood.

Plate XXV. is from Ruskin's pencil drawing of 1835 of the Castelbarco Tomb; it is at Brantwood. Its inclusion here serves to remind us of Ruskin's early admiration of a monument—"chief among all sepulchral marbles of a land of mourning"[1]—to which he returned with unabated enthusiasm in 1869 (see pp. xlix., 451–453). A drawing of the monument, made in that year, has been given in an earlier volume of this edition.[2]

Plate XXVI. is from a drawing of 1869, showing the Piazza de' Signori. It is No. 43 in the "Verona" Catalogue (p. 457), and is now No. 80 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). It is in pencil (19 × 13).

E. T. C.

[1] Vol. IX. p. 177.
[2] Plate D in Vol. IX. (p. 176).

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

I

SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN

(1860)

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This paper first appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* for March 1860, vol. i. pp. 322–328. It was unsigned; but a review in the *Critic*, March 3, 1860, remarked, "There is no need of signature to the charming little article to inform us of the secret of its authorship. None but the pen of John Ruskin could have produced this sketch of the two masters."

The paper was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 221–236 (§§ 149–165); and again in the second edition of that work (1899), vol. i. pp. 225–240 (§§ 149–165).]

Digitized by Google

SIR JOSHUA AND HOLBEIN

1. LONG ago discarded from our National Gallery, with the contempt logically due to national or English pictures, —lost to sight and memory for many a year in the Ogygian seclusions of Marlborough House—there have reappeared at last, in more honourable exile at Kensington, two great pictures by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Two, with others; but these alone worth many an entanglement among the cross-roads of the West, to see for half-an-hour by spring sunshine:—the *Holy Family*, and the *Graces*, side by side now in the principal room. Great, as ever was work wrought by man. In placid strength, and subtlest science, unsurpassed;—in sweet felicity, incomparable.[1]

2. If you truly want to know what good work of painter's hand is, study those two pictures from side to side, and miss no inch of them (you will hardly, eventually, be inclined to miss one): in some respects there is no execution like it; none so open in the magic. For the work of other great men is hidden in its wonderfulness—you cannot see how it was done. But in Sir Joshua's there is no mystery: it is all amazement. No question but that the touch was so laid; only that it *could* have been so laid, is a marvel for ever. So also there is no painting so majestic in sweetness. He is lily-sceptred: his power blossoms, but burdens not. All other men of equal dignity paint more slowly; all others of equal force

[1] [For another reference to the "Holy Family" (No. 78), no longer publicly exhibited (owing to its bad state of preservation), see Vol. III. p. 30. The picture is here illustrated from an engraving (Plate I.). "The Graces decorating a Statue of Hymen" is No. 79 in the National Gallery; the picture is a fancy portrait of the three daughters of Sir William Montgomery. For another reference to it, see Vol. XIV. p. 472.]

Digitized by Google

paint less lightly. Tintoret lays his line like a king marking the boundaries of conquered lands; but Sir Joshua leaves it as a summer wind its trace on a lake; he could have painted on a silken veil, where it fell free, and not bent it.

3. Such at least is his touch when it is life that he paints: for things lifeless he has a severer hand. If you examine that picture of the *Graces* you will find it reverses all the ordinary ideas of expedient treatment. By other men flesh is firmly painted, but accessories lightly. Sir Joshua paints accessories firmly,* flesh lightly;—nay, flesh not at all, but spirit. The wreath of flowers he feels to be material; and gleam by gleam strikes fearlessly the silver and violet leaves out of the darkness. But the three maidens are less substantial than rose petals. No flushed nor frosted tissue that ever faded in night wind is so tender as they; no hue may reach, no line measure, what is in them so gracious and so fair. Let the hand move softly—itself as a spirit; for this is Life, of which it touches the imagery.

4. "And yet——"

Yes: you do well to pause. There is a "yet" to be thought of. I did not bring you to these pictures to see wonderful work merely, or womanly beauty merely. I brought you chiefly to look at that Madonna, believing that you might remember other Madonnas, unlike her; and might think it desirable to consider wherein the difference lay:—other Madonnas not by Sir Joshua, who painted Madonnas but seldom. Who perhaps, if truth must be told, painted them never: for surely this dearest pet of an English girl, with the little curl of lovely hair under her ear, is *not* one.

5. Why did not Sir Joshua—or could not—or would not

* As showing gigantic power of hand, joined with utmost accuracy and rapidity, the folds of drapery under the breast of the Virgin are, perhaps, as marvellous a piece of work as could be found in any picture, of whatever time or master.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

I

Sir Joshua Reynolds

W Sharp
Allen & Co Sc

The Holy Family

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Sir Joshua—paint Madonnas? neither he, nor his great rival-friend Gainsborough?[1] Both of them painters of women, such as since Giorgione and Correggio had not been; both painters of men, such as had not been since Titian. How is it that these English friends can so brightly paint that particular order of humanity which we call "gentlemen and ladies," but neither heroes, nor saints, nor angels? Can it be because they were both country-bred boys, and for ever after strangely sensitive to courtliness? Why, Giotto also was a country-bred boy. Allegri's native Correggio, Titian's Cadore, were but hill villages; yet these men painted not the court, nor the drawing-room, but the Earth: and not a little of Heaven besides: while our good Sir Joshua never trusts himself outside the park palings. He could not even have drawn the strawberry girl,[2] unless she had got through a gap in them—or rather, I think, she must have been let in at the porter's lodge, for her strawberries are in a pottle, ready for the ladies at the Hall. Giorgione would have set them, wild and fragrant, among their leaves, in her hand. Between his fairness, and Sir Joshua's May-fairness, there is a strange, impassable limit—as of the white reef that in Pacific isles encircles their inner lakelets, and shuts them from the surf and sound of sea. Clear and calm they rest, reflecting fringed shadows of the palm-trees, and the passing of fretted clouds across their own sweet circle of blue sky. But beyond, and round and round their coral bar, lies the blue of sea and heaven together—blue of eternal deep.

6. You will find it a pregnant question, if you follow it forth, and leading to many others, not trivial, Why it is, that in Sir Joshua's girl, or Gainsborough's, we always think first of the Ladyhood; but in Giotto's, of the Womanhood? Why, in Sir Joshua's hero, or Vandyck's,

[1] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 378), and *Academy Notes*, 1859 (Vol. XIV. p. 223).]

[2] ["The Strawberry Girl" (exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1773) is No. 40 in the Wallace Collection, Hertford House.]

Digitized by Google

it is always the Prince or the Sir whom we see first; but in Titian's, the man.

Not that Titian's gentlemen are less finished than Sir Joshua's; but their gentlemanliness* is not the principal thing about them; their manhood absorbs, conquers, wears it as a despised thing. Nor—and this is another stern ground of separation—will Titian make a gentleman of every one he paints. He will make him so if he is so, not otherwise; and this not merely in general servitude to truth, but because, in his sympathy with deeper humanity, the courtier is not more interesting to him than any one else. "You have learned to dance and fence; you can speak with clearness, and think with precision; your hands are small, your senses acute, and your features well-shaped. Yes: I see all this in you, and will do it justice. You shall stand as none but a well-bred man could stand; and your fingers shall fall on the sword-hilt as no fingers could but those that knew the grasp of it. But for the rest, this grisly fisherman, with rusty cheek and rope-frayed hand, is a man as well as you, and might possibly make several of you, if souls were divisible. His bronze colour is quite as interesting to me, Titian, as your paleness, and his hoary spray of stormy hair takes the light as well as your waving curls. Him also I will paint, with such picturesqueness as he may have; yet not putting the picturesqueness first in him, as in you I have not put the gentlemanliness first. In him I see a strong human creature, contending with all hardship: in you also a human creature, uncontending, and possibly not strong. Contention

* The reader must observe that I use the word here in a limited sense, as meaning only the effect of careful education, good society, and refined habits of life, on average temper and character. Of deep and true gentlemanliness—based as it is on intense sensibility and sincerity, perfected by courage, and other qualities of race; as well as of that union of insensibility with cunning, which is the essence of vulgarity, I shall have to speak at length in another place.[1]

[1] [A reference to the chapter on Vulgarity in the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*, which was published three months after the present paper appeared.]

Digitized by Google

or strength, weakness or picturesqueness, and all other such accidents in either, shall have due place. But the immortality and miracle of you—this clay that burns, this colour that changes—are in truth the awful things in both: these shall be first painted—and last."

7. With which question respecting treatment of character we have to connect also this further one: How is it that the attempts of so great painters as Reynolds and Gainsborough are, beyond portraiture, limited almost like children's? No domestic drama—no history—no noble natural scenes, far less any religious subject:—only market carts; girls with pigs; woodmen going home to supper; watering-places; grey cart-horses in fields, and such like. Reynolds, indeed, once or twice touched higher themes,—"among the chords his fingers laid,"[1] and recoiled: wisely; for, strange to say, his very sensibility deserts him when he leaves his courtly quiet. The horror of the subjects he chose (Cardinal Beaufort and Ugolino)[2] showed inherent apathy: had he felt deeply, he would not have sought for this strongest possible excitement of feeling,—would not willingly have dwelt on the worst conditions of despair—the despair of the ignoble. His religious subjects are conceived even with less care than these. Beautiful as it is, this Holy Family by which we stand has neither dignity nor sacredness, other than those which attach to every group of gentle mother and ruddy babe; while his Faiths, Charities, or other well-ordered and emblem-fitted virtues, are even less lovely than his ordinary portraits of women.[3]

It was a faultful temper, which, having so mighty a power of realization at command, never became so much

[1] [Compare Scott's "amid the strings his finger stray'd" (*Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Introduction) and "among the strings his fingers range" (*Rokeby*, canto v. stanza 19).]

[2] ["The Death of Cardinal Beaufort" (illustrating *Henry VI.*, part ii. Act iii.), painted for Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery in 1790, is at Petworth; the sketch for the picture is in the Dulwich Gallery (No. 254). The picture of "Ugolino and his Sons," exhibited at the Academy in 1773, is at Knole; a study for the head of Ugolino is in the National Gallery (No. 106).]

[3] [Reynolds's designs for the "Seven Virtues" were executed in the window of the ante-chapel at New College, Oxford; for another reference to the window, see Vol. XVI. p. 417.]

Digitized by Google

interested in any fact of human history as to spend one touch of heartfelt skill upon it;—which, yielding momentarily to indolent imagination, ended, at best, in a Puck, or a Thais; a Mercury as Thief, or a Cupid as Linkboy.[1] How wide the interval between this gently trivial humour, guided by the wave of a feather, or arrested by the enchantment of a smile,—and the habitual dwelling of the thoughts of the great Greeks and Florentines among the beings and the interests of the eternal world!

8. In some degree it may indeed be true that the modesty and sense of the English painters are the causes of their simple practice. All that they did, they did well, and attempted nothing over which conquest was doubtful. They knew they could paint men and women: it did not follow that they could paint angels. Their own gifts never appeared to them so great as to call for serious question as to the use to be made of them. "They could mix colours and catch likeness—yes; but were they therefore able to teach religion, or reform the world? To support themselves honourably, pass the hours of life happily, please their friends, and leave no enemies, was not this all that duty could require, or prudence recommend? Their own art was, it seemed, difficult enough to employ all their genius: was it reasonable to hope also to be poets or theologians? Such men had, indeed, existed; but the age of miracles and prophets was long past; nor, because they could seize the trick of an expression, or the turn of a head, had they any right to think themselves able to conceive heroes with Homer, or gods with Michael Angelo."

9. Such was, in the main, their feeling: wise, modest, unenvious, and unambitious. Meaner men, their contemporaries or successors, raved of high art with incoherent passion; arrogated to themselves an equality with the

[1] [Of the pictures here referred to, "Puck" and "Thais," as also "Mrs. Pelham feeding Chickens," were shown at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857. "Puck" is in the collection of Mr. G. W. Fitzwilliam. "Thais" (a portrait of Miss Emily Pott in that character, painted 1781) is at Waddesdon. "Mercury as Thief" and "Cupid as Linkboy" are in the collection of Mr. A. Henderson.]

Digitized by Google

masters of elder time, and declaimed against the degenerate tastes of a public which acknowledged not the return of the Heraclidæ.[1] But the two great—the two only painters of their age—happy in a reputation founded as deeply in the heart as in the judgment of mankind, demanded no higher function than that of soothing the domestic affections; and achieved for themselves at last an immortality not the less noble, because in their lifetime they had concerned themselves less to claim it than to bestow.

10. Yet, while we acknowledge the discretion and simple-heartedness of these men, honouring them for both: and the more when we compare their tranquil powers with the hot egotism and hollow ambition of their inferiors: we have to remember, on the other hand, that the measure they thus set to their aims was, if a just, yet a narrow one; that amiable discretion is not the highest virtue, nor to please the frivolous, the best success. There is probably some strange weakness in the painter, and some fatal error in the age, when in thinking over the examples of their greatest work, for some type of culminating loveliness or veracity, we remember no expression either of religion or heroism,[2] and instead of reverently naming a Madonna di San Sisto, can only whisper, modestly, "Mrs. Pelham feeding chickens."[3]

11. The nature of the fault, so far as it exists in the painters themselves, may perhaps best be discerned by

[1] [A passage in the first draft shows the particular painters of whom Ruskin was thinking as arrogating to themselves the rôle of the descendants of Hercules:—

> "Barry foamed over his frescoes in classic rage; West compared religious subjects with exact decorum and Raphaelesque propriety; Opie and Fuseli adorned the loftiest phases of the drama with sublime incoherence; and Haydon believed himself Phidias in the morning, and retired as Michael Angelo at night."

For similar allusions to Barry, see Vol. III. p. 649, Vol. VII. p. 231, and *Eagle's Nest*, § 63; for West, Vol. IV. p. 382, Vol. V. p. 125, Vol. X. p. 125; for Opie, Vol. XIV. p. 330; for Fuseli, Vol. V. p. 108, Vol. VII. p. 419; and for Haydon, *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 85 (below, p. 133).]

[2] [In the MS.: "we remember neither saint nor hero, neither Madonna by the cradle, nor angel by the grave."]

[3] [This picture, painted 1770–1774, is in the Earl of Yarborough's collection; for another reference to it, see *Art of England*, § 66.]

Digitized by Google

comparing them with a man who went not far beyond them in his general range of effort, but who did all his work in a wholly different temper—Hans Holbein.

The first great difference between them is of course in completeness of execution. Sir Joshua's and Gainsborough's work, at its best, is only magnificent sketching; giving indeed, in places, a perfection of result unattainable by other methods,[1] and possessing always a charm of grace and power exclusively its own; yet, in its slightness addressing itself, purposefully, to the casual glance, and common thought—eager to arrest the passer-by, but careless to detain him; or detaining him, if at all, by an unexplained enchantment, not by continuance of teaching, or development of idea. But the work of Holbein is true and thorough; accomplished, in the highest as the most literal sense, with a calm entireness of unaffected resolution, which sacrifices nothing, forgets nothing, and fears nothing.

12. In the portrait of the Hausmann George Gyzen,* every accessory is perfect with a fine perfection: the carnations in the glass vase by his side—the ball of gold, chased with blue enamel, suspended on the wall—the books—the steelyard—the papers on the table, the seal-ring, with its quartered bearings,—all intensely there, and there in beauty of which no one could have dreamed that even flowers or gold were capable, far less parchment or steel. But every change of shade is felt, every rich and rubied line of petal followed; every subdued gleam in the soft blue of the enamel and bending of the gold touched with a hand whose patience of regard creates rather than paints. The jewel itself was not so precious as the rays of enduring light which form it, and flash from it, beneath that errorless hand. The man himself, what he was—not more; but to

* Museum of Berlin.[2]

[1] [Compare, on the subject of sketchiness in this connexion, Vol. III. p. 120, Vol. V. p. 186, and Vol. VII. p. 237.]

[2] [For Ruskin's note of 1859 on this picture (here reproduced), see Vol. VII. p. 490. It was painted in 1532, and is a portrait of Georg Giaze, a merchant of the steelyard (Plate II.).]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Portrait of Georg Gisze

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

all conceivable proof of sight—in all aspect of life or thought—not less. He sits alone in his accustomed room, his common work laid out before him; he is conscious of no presence, assumes no dignity, bears no sudden or superficial look of care or interest, lives only as he lived—but for ever.

13. The time occupied in painting this portrait was probably twenty times greater than Sir Joshua ever spent on a single picture, however large. The result is, to the general spectator, less attractive. In some qualities of force and grace it is absolutely inferior. But it is inexhaustible. Every detail of it wins, retains, rewards the attention with a continually increasing sense of wonderfulness. It is also wholly true. So far as it reaches, it contains the absolute facts of colour, form, and character, rendered with an unaccusable faithfulness. There is no question respecting things which it is best worth while to know, or things which it is unnecessary to state, or which might be overlooked with advantage. What of this man and his house were visible to Holbein, are visible to us: we may despise if we will; deny or doubt, we shall not; if we care to know anything concerning them, great or small, so much as may by the eye be known is for ever knowable, reliable, indisputable.

14. Respecting the advantage, or the contrary, of so great earnestness in drawing a portrait of an uncelebrated person, we raise at present no debate: I only wish the reader to note this quality of earnestness, as entirely separating Holbein from Sir Joshua,—raising him into another sphere of intellect. For here is no question of mere difference in style or in power, none of minuteness or largeness. It is a question of Entireness. Holbein is *complete* in intellect: what he sees, he sees with his whole soul: what he paints, he paints with his whole might. Sir Joshua sees partially, slightly, tenderly—catches the flying lights of things, the momentary glooms: paints also partially, tenderly, never with half his strength; content

Digitized by Google

with uncertain visions, insecure delights; the truth not precious nor significant to him, only pleasing; falsehood also pleasurable, even useful on occasion—must, however, be discreetly touched, just enough to make all men noble, all women lovely: "we do not need this flattery often, most of those we know being such; and it is a pleasant world, and with diligence—for nothing can be done without diligence—every day till four" (says Sir Joshua)—"a painter's is a happy life."[1]

Yes: and the Isis, with her swans, and shadows of Windsor Forest, is a sweet stream, touching her shores softly. The Rhine at Basle is of another temper, stern and deep, as strong, however bright its face: winding far through the solemn plain, beneath the slopes of Jura, tufted and steep: sweeping away into its regardless calm of current the waves of that little brook of St. Jakob, that bathe the Swiss Thermopylæ;* the low village nestling beneath a little bank of sloping fields—its spire seen white against the deep blue shadows of the Jura pines.

15. Gazing on that scene day by day, Holbein went his own way, with the earnestness and silent swell of the strong river—not unconscious of the awe, nor of the sanctities of his life. The snows of the eternal Alps giving forth their strength to it; the blood of the St. Jakob brook poured into it as it passes by—not in vain. He also could feel his strength coming from white snows far off in heaven.[2] He also bore upon him the purple stain

* Of 1,200 Swiss, who fought by that brookside, ten only returned. The battle checked the attack of the French, led by Louis XI. (then Dauphin) in 1444; and was the first of the great series of efforts and victories which were closed at Nancy by the death of Charles of Burgundy.

---

[1] [For references to Reynolds's inculcation of diligence, see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 48, 126, 145.]

[2] [As an illustration of Ruskin's care in revising, the first draft of this passage is subjoined:—

> "He also could recognise his strength coming from white sanctity far off in heaven. He also bore with him the purple stain of the earth sorrow. A grave man, knowing the motions that keep truest time to the music of Death. Gravely befriended also, drawing the meditative

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Meyer Madonna

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

of the earth sorrow. A grave man, knowing what steps of men keep truest time to the chanting of Death. Having grave friends also;—the same singing heard far off, it seems to me, or, perhaps, even low in the room, by that family of Sir Thomas More;[1] or mingling with the hum of bees in the meadows outside the towered wall of Basle; or making the words of the book more tuneable, which meditative Erasmus looks upon.[2] Nay, that same soft Death-music is on the lips even of Holbein's Madonna, who, among many, is the Virgin you had best compare with the one before whose image we have stood so long.

Holbein's is at Dresden, companioned by the Madonna di San Sisto; but both are visible enough to you here, for, by a strange coincidence, they are (at least so far as I know) the only two great pictures in the world which have been faultlessly engraved.

16. The received tradition respecting the Holbein Madonna is beautiful;[3] and I believe the interpretation to be true. A father and mother have prayed to her for the life of their sick child. She appears to them, her own Christ

Erasmus profile often enough;—the same music being heard far off, it seems to me; murmur of it even, perhaps, low in the room by that family of Sir Thomas More; or mingling with the hum of bees in the orchards there outside the wall of Basle; making the words more tuneable in this book for Erasmus."]

[1] [A pen-and-ink sketch, in which we see More surrounded by all the members of his family, is now in the gallery of Basle (No. 111); it was given by the artist to Erasmus in 1528; the original picture, made from the sketch, is not known.]

[2] [Ruskin may refer to the portrait in the Basle Museum, or to the similar one in the Louvre: for other references to it, see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 177, and *Præterita*, i. § 229.]

[3] [It is now generally believed that the Dresden picture is a later Dutch copy of the original by Holbein at Darmstadt. Doubt was first thrown on the authenticity of the Dresden picture a few years after Ruskin wrote this paper (see R. N. Wornum's *Epochs of Painting*, 1864, p. 493 *n.*). The official catalogue of the Dresden Gallery published in 1833 stated that "the Madonna holds in her arms an apparently deceased child of the family." The interpretation given by Ruskin was also in part given by Mrs. Jameson: see her *Legends of the Madonna*, 1852, p. 111. The meaning of the picture and the question which version is the authentic one are fully discussed in a monograph written by R. N. Wornum for the Arundel Society in 1871 (*Hans Holbein and the Meier Madonna*), where also particulars are given of Jacob Meier, Burgomaster of Basle, for whom the picture was painted. Our Plate (III.) is from the Dresden picture, as that is the one described by Ruskin: for another reference to it, see *Lectures on Art*, § 55.]

Digitized by Google

in her arms. She puts down her Christ beside them—takes their child into her arms instead. It lies down upon her bosom, and stretches its hand to its father and mother, saying farewell.

This interpretation of the picture has been doubted, as nearly all the most precious truths of pictures have been doubted, and forgotten. But, even supposing it erroneous, the design is not less characteristic of Holbein. For that there are signs of suffering on the features of the child in the arms of the Virgin, is beyond question; and if this child be intended for the Christ,[1] it would not be doubtful to my mind, that, of the two—Raphael and Holbein—the latter had given the truest aspect and deepest reading of the early life of the Redeemer. Raphael sought to express His power only; but Holbein His labour and sorrow.

17. There are two other pictures which you should remember together with this (attributed, indeed, but with no semblance of probability, to the elder Holbein, none of whose work, preserved at Basle, or elsewhere, approaches in the slightest degree to their power), the St. Barbara and St. Elizabeth.* I do not know among the pictures of the great sacred schools any at once so powerful, so simple, so pathetically expressive of the need of the heart that conceived them. Not ascetic, nor quaint, nor feverishly or fondly passionate, nor wrapt in withdrawn solemnities of

* Pinacothek of Munich.[2]

---

[1] [The theory in that case being that the child on the ground is the sick child, whose sickness the infant Christ has taken on himself, with allusion to Isaiah liii. 6—"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."]

[2] [Plate IV. The "St. Barbara" (No. 210 in the Munich Gallery) is the left wing, and the "St. Elizabeth of Hungary" (No. 211) the right wing of a central picture of "St. Sebastian" (No. 209). The date of the picture is 1515, and Ruskin's conjecture that it is the work of the younger Holbein, is now partly accepted in the official catalogue of the Gallery, where it is suggested that, though the work was undoubtedly ordered from the father, the son may have been responsible for much of the execution (see *Catalogue of the Paintings in the Old Pinakothek, Munich, with Historical Introduction by Franz V. Reber*, Illustrated Edition, p. 45). The "St. Elizabeth" is discussed by Ruskin in *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 164, 167, 256.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Holbein

Photo Hanfstaengl
Allen & Co Sc.

Saint Barbara and Saint Elizabeth

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

thought. Only entirely true — entirely pure. No depth of glowing heaven beyond them — but the clear sharp sweetness of the northern air: no splendour of rich colour, striving to adorn them with better brightness than of the day: a grey glory, as of moonlight without mist, dwelling on face and fold of dress;—all faultless-fair. Creatures they are, humble by nature, not by self-condemnation; merciful by habit, not by tearful impulse; lofty without consciousness; gentle without weakness; wholly in this present world, doing its work calmly; beautiful with all that holiest life can reach—yet already freed from all that holiest death can cast away.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

II

THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE

(1865)

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This paper was read by Ruskin at the ordinary meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects on May 15, 1865, and was afterwards published in the *Sessional Papers* of the Institute, 1864–1865. Part iii., No. 2, pp. 139–147. Its full title (as there appears) was "An Inquiry into some of the Conditions at present affecting the Study of Architecture in our Schools."

The paper was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 371–400 (§§ 274–291); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. i. pp. 376–403 (§§ 274–291).

In this edition a misprint of "Thurii" for "Thurium" has been corrected in § 3, and two misprints have been corrected in the quotation from Dante (§ 8), "pittura" for "pintura" and "et" for "ed."]

Digitized by Google

THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE IN OUR SCHOOLS

1. I SUPPOSE there is no man who, permitted to address, for the first time, the Institute of British Architects, would not feel himself abashed and restrained, doubtful of his claim to be heard by them, even if he attempted only to describe what had come under his personal observation; much more if on the occasion he thought it would be expected of him to touch upon any of the general principles of the art of architecture before its principal English masters.

But if any more than another should feel thus abashed, it is certainly one who has first to ask their pardon for the petulance of boyish expressions of partial thought; for ungraceful advocacy of principles which needed no support from him, and discourteous blame of work of which he had never felt the difficulty.

2. Yet, when I ask this pardon, gentlemen—and I do it sincerely and in shame—it is not as desiring to retract anything in the general tenor and scope of what I have hitherto tried to say. Permit me the pain, and the apparent impertinence, of speaking for a moment of my own past work; for it is necessary that what I am about to submit to you to-night should be spoken in no disadvantageous connection with that; and yet understood as spoken, in no discordance of purpose with that. Indeed there is much in old work of mine which I could wish to put out of mind. Reasonings, perhaps not in themselves false, but founded on insufficient data and imperfect experience—eager preferences, and dislikes, dependent on chance circumstances of association, and limitations of sphere

Digitized by Google

of labour: but, while I would fain now, if I could, modify the applications, and chasten the extravagance of my writings, let me also say of them that they were the expression of a delight in the art of architecture which was too intense to be vitally deceived, and of an inquiry too honest and eager to be without some useful result; and I only wish I had now time, and strength and power of mind, to carry on, more worthily, the main endeavour of my early work. That main endeavour has been throughout to set forth the life of the individual human spirit as modifying the application of the formal laws of architecture, no less than of all other arts;[1] and to show that the power and advance of this art, even in conditions of formal nobleness, were dependent on its just association with sculpture as a means of expressing the beauty of natural forms:[2] and I the more boldly ask your permission to insist somewhat on this main meaning of my past work, because there are many buildings now rising in the streets of London, as in other cities of England, which appear to be designed in accordance with this principle, and which are, I believe, more offensive to all who thoughtfully concur with me in accepting the principle of Naturalism than they are to the classical architect to whose modes of design they are visibly antagonistic. These buildings, in which the mere cast of a flower, or the realization of a vulgar face, carved without pleasure by a workman who is only endeavouring to attract attention by novelty, and then fastened on, or appearing to be fastened, as chance may dictate, to an arch, or a pillar, or a wall, hold such relation to nobly naturalistic architecture as common sign-painters' furniture landscapes do to painting, or commonest wax-work to Greek sculpture; and the feelings with which true naturalists regard such buildings of this class are, as nearly as might be, what a painter would experience, if, having contended earnestly against

[1] [On this point, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. pp. xvii., 201).]
[2] [Here see *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Vol. VIII. pp. 170, 174; *Academy Notes*, 1857 (Vol. XIV. p. 118); and *Two Paths*, §§ 115, 123 (Vol. XVI. pp. 357, 361).]

Digitized by Google

conventional schools, and having asserted that Greek vase-painting and Egyptian wall-painting, and Mediæval glass-painting, though beautiful, all, in their place and way, were yet subordinate arts, and culminated only in perfectly naturalistic work such as Raphael's in fresco, and Titian's on canvas;—if, I say, a painter, fixed in such faith in an entire, intellectual and manly truth, and maintaining that an Egyptian profile of a head, however decoratively applicable, was only noble for such human truth as it contained, and was imperfect and ignoble beside a work of Titian's, were shown, by his antagonist, the coloured daguerreotype of a human body in its nakedness, and told that it was art such as that which he really advocated, and to such art that his principles, if carried out, would finally lead.

8. And because this question lies at the very root of the organization of the system of instruction for our youth, I venture boldly to express the surprise and regret with which I see our schools still agitated by assertions of the opposition of Naturalism to Invention, and to the higher conditions of art. Even in this very room I believe there has lately been question[1] whether a sculptor should look at a real living creature of which he had to carve the image. I would answer in one sense,—no; that is to say, he ought to carve no living creature while he still needs to look at it. If we do not know what a human body is like, we certainly had better look, and look often, at it, before we carve it; but if we already know the human likeness so well that we can carve it by light of memory, we shall not need to ask whether we ought now to look at it or not; and what is true of man is true of all other creatures and organisms—of bird, and beast, and leaf. No assertion is more at variance with the laws of classical as well as of subsequent art than the common one that species should not be distinguished in great design.[2] We might as well say that we ought to carve a man so as

[1] [The discussion is not reported in the *Sessional Proceedings*.]
[2] [For a discussion of this assertion in the case of painting, see Vol. III. p. 150.]

Digitized by Google

not to know him from an ape, as that we should carve a lily so as not to know it from a thistle. It is difficult for me to conceive how this can be asserted in the presence of any remains either of great Greek or Italian art. A Greek looked at a cockle-shell or a cuttlefish as carefully as he looked at an Olympic conqueror. The eagle of Elis, the lion of Velia, the horse of Syracuse, the bull of Thurium, the dolphin of Tarentum, the crab of Agrigentum, and the crawfish of Catana, are studied as closely, every one of them, as the Juno of Argos, or Apollo of Clazomenæ.[1] Idealism, so far from being contrary to special truth, is the very abstraction of speciality from everything else. It is the earnest statement of the characters which make man man, and cockle cockle, and flesh flesh, and fish fish. Feeble thinkers, indeed, always suppose that distinction of kind involves meanness of style; but the meanness is in the treatment, not in the distinction. There is a noble way of carving a man, and a mean one; and there is a noble way of carving a beetle, and a mean one; and a great sculptor carves his scarabaeus grandly, as he carves his king, while a mean sculptor makes vermin of both. And it is a sorrowful truth, yet a sublime one, that this greatness of treatment cannot be taught by talking about it. No, nor even by enforced imitative practice of it. Men treat their subjects nobly only when they themselves become noble; not till then.[2] And that elevation of their own nature is assuredly not to be effected by a course

[1] [For the eagle of Elis, see III. B. 33 in the exhibition of electrotypes at the British Museum (Plate 23 in the *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*). For the lion of Velia, IV. C. 24 (Plate 34). Examples of the horse of Syracuse are given on Plate XXIII. in *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX.). For the bull of Thurium, see Plate XXII. in the same. The dolphin of Tarentum may be seen on III. C. 7–10 in the British Museum (Plate 24), and see Plate XVIII. here (below, p. 410). For another reference to the coins of Tarentum, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 18 (below, p. 68, and *Val d'Arno*, § 171). For the crab of Agrigentum, see II. C. 14 in the British Museum (Plate 16). For the crawfish of Catana, behind a head of Apollo, see the coin illustrated in Plate VI. (Fig. 16) of Percy Gardner's *Types of Greek Coins* (1883). A head of Juno of Argos is shown on Plate XVIII. here; and another, on Plate XV. in *Aratra Pentelici*. For the Apollo of Clazomenæ, see *ibid.*, Plate X. For other references to these coins, see *Ethics of the Dust*, § 107 (Vol. XVIII. p. 343 *n.*), and *Queen of the Air*, § 167 (below, p. 413).]

[2] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 66 (Vol. XVI. p. 310).]

Digitized by Google

of drawing from models, however well chosen, or of listening to lectures, however well intended.

Art, national or individual, is the result of a long course of previous life and training; a necessary result, if that life has been loyal, and an impossible one, if it has been base. Let a nation be healthful, happy, pure in its enjoyments, brave in its acts, and broad in its affections, and its art will spring round and within it as freely as the foam from a fountain; but let the springs of its life be impure, and its course polluted, and you will not get the bright spray by treatises on the mathematical structure of bubbles.

4. And I am to-night the more restrained in addressing you, because, gentlemen—I tell you honestly—I am weary of all writing and speaking about art,[1] and most of my own. No good is to be reached that way. The last fifty years have, in every civilized country of Europe, produced more brilliant thought, and more subtle reasoning about art than the five thousand before them, and what has it all come to? Do not let it be thought that I am insensible to the high merits of much of our modern work. It cannot be for a moment supposed that in speaking of the inefficient expression of the doctrines which writers on art have tried to enforce, I was thinking of such Gothic as has been designed and built by Mr. Scott, Mr. Butterfield, Mr. Street, Mr. Waterhouse, Mr. Godwin, or my dead friend, Mr. Woodward.[2] Their work has been original and independent. So far as it is good, it has been founded on principles learned not from books, but by study of the monuments of the great schools, developed by national grandeur, not by philosophical speculation. But I am entirely assured that those who have done best among us

[1] [Compare Ruskin's subsequent remarks; below, pp. 38, 215.]

[2] [For other (and sometimes less complimentary) references to the work of Sir Gilbert Scott, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 79 *n.*); *Academy Notes*, 1857 (Vol. XIV. p. 118); *Præterita*, ii. § 153; *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 11; and General Index. For references to G. E. Street, see Vol. XVI. pp. 127 *n.*, 461. For a high appreciation of a building by Mr. Waterhouse, see Vol. XVIII. p. lxxv.; and for Woodward, Vol. XVI. pp. xliii. *seq.*, and Vol. XVIII. p. 150.]

Digitized by Google

are the least satisfied with what they have done, and will admit a sorrowful concurrence in my belief that the spirit, or rather, I should say, the dispirit, of the age, is heavily against them; that all the ingenious writing or thinking which is so rife amongst us has failed to educate a public capable of taking true pleasure in any kind of art, and that the best designers never satisfy their own requirements of themselves, unless by vainly addressing another temper of mind, and providing for another manner of life, than ours. All lovely architecture was designed for cities in cloudless air; for cities in which piazzas and gardens opened in bright populousness and peace;[1] cities built that men might live happily in them, and take delight daily in each other's presence and powers. But our cities, built in black air which, by its accumulated foulness, first renders all ornament invisible in distance, and then chokes its interstices with soot; cities which are mere crowded masses of store, and warehouse, and counter, and are therefore to the rest of the world what the larder and cellar are to a private house; cities in which the object of men is not life, but labour; and in which all chief magnitude of edifice is to enclose machinery; cities in which the streets are not the avenues for the passing and procession of a happy people, but the drains for the discharge of a tormented mob, in which the only object in reaching any spot is to be transferred to another; in which existence becomes mere transition, and every creature is only one atom in a drift of human dust, and current of interchanging particles, circulating here by tunnels underground, and there by tubes in the air;[2] for a city, or cities, such as this no architecture is possible—nay, no desire of it is possible to their inhabitants.

5. One of the most singular proofs of the vanity of all hope that conditions of art may be combined with the occupations of such a city, has been given lately in the

[1] [See in this connexion the descriptions of Verona in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (Vol. XII. pp. 14–15) and *A Joy for Ever* (Vol. XVI. pp. 66–67).]

[2] [The reference is presumably to the tubular bridge over the Menai Straits, mentioned in *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 456).]

Digitized by Google

design of the new iron bridge over the Thames at Blackfriars.[1] Distinct attempt has been there made to obtain architectural effect on a grand scale. Nor was there anything in the nature of the work to prevent such an effort being successful. It is not edifices, being of iron, or of glass, or thrown into new forms, demanded by new purposes, which need hinder its being beautiful.[2] But it is the absence of all desire of beauty, of all joy in fancy, and of all freedom in thought. If a Greek, or Egyptian, or Gothic architect had been required to design such a bridge, he would have looked instantly at the main conditions of its structure, and dwelt on them with the delight of imagination. He would have seen that the main thing to be done was to hold a horizontal group of iron rods steadily and straight over stone piers. Then he would have said to himself (or felt without saying), "It is this holding,—this grasp,—this securing tenor of a thing which might be shaken, so that it cannot be shaken, on which I have to insist." And he would have put some life into those iron tenons. As a Greek put human life into his pillars and produced the caryatid; and an Egyptian, lotus life into his pillars and produced the lily capital: so here, either of them would have put some gigantic or some angelic life into those colossal sockets. He would perhaps have put vast winged statues of bronze, folding their wings, and grasping the iron rails with their hands; or monstrous eagles, or serpents holding with claw or coil, or strong four-footed animals couchant, holding with the paw, or in fierce action, holding with teeth. Thousands of grotesque or of lovely thoughts would have risen before him, and the bronze forms, animal or human, would have signified, either in symbol or in legend, whatever might be gracefully told respecting the purposes of the work and the

[1] [Ruskin's description in the following passage is of the original railway bridge to Ludgate Hill Station. In later years a second iron bridge (of different and worse design) was constructed, almost touching the first bridge, to carry additional traffic. The two railway bridges are rendered less conspicuous by the road bridge at Blackfriars, to the west of them, opened in 1869.]

[2] [Compare the discussion of this subject in *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. pp. 455–456).]

Digitized by Google

districts to which it conducted. Whereas, now, the entire invention of the designer seems to have exhausted itself in exaggerating to an enormous size a weak form of iron nut, and in conveying the information upon it, in large letters, that it belongs to the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company. I believe then, gentlemen, that if there were any life in the national mind in such respects, it would be shown in these its most energetic and costly works. But that there is no such life, nothing but a galvanic restlessness and covetousness, with which it is for the present vain to strive; and in the midst of which, tormented at once by its activities and its apathies, having their work continually thrust aside and dishonoured, always seen to disadvantage, and overtopped by huge masses, discordant and destructive, even the best architects must be unable to do justice to their own powers.

6. But, gentlemen, while thus the mechanisms of the age prevent even the wisest and best of its artists from producing entirely good work, may we not reflect with consternation what a marvellous ability the luxury of the age, and the very advantages of education, confer on the unwise and ignoble for the production of attractively and infectiously *bad* work? I do not think that this adverse influence, necessarily affecting all conditions of so-called civilization, has been ever enough considered. It is impossible to calculate the power of the false workman in an advanced period of national life, nor the temptation to all workmen, to *become* false.

7. First, there is the irresistible appeal to vanity. There is hardly any temptation of the kind (there cannot be) while the arts are in progress. The best men must then always be ashamed of themselves; they never can be satisfied with their work absolutely, but only as it is progressive. Take, for instance, any archaic head intended to be beautiful; say, the Attic Athena, or the early Arethusa of Syracuse.[1] In that, and in all archaic work

[1] [For the archaic Athena on an Athenian coin, see Fig. 4 in *Aratra Pentelici* (§ 80); and for the early Arethusa of Syracuse, *ibid.*, Plate II.]

Digitized by Google

of promise, there is much that is inefficient, much that to us appears ridiculous—but nothing sensual, nothing vain, nothing spurious or imitative. It is a child's work, a childish nation's work, but not a fool's work. You find in children the same tolerance of ugliness, the same eager and innocent delight in their own work for the moment, however feeble; but next day it is thrown aside, and something better is done. Now, in this careless play, a child or a childish nation differs inherently from a foolish educated person, or a nation advanced in pseudo-civilization. The educated person has seen all kinds of beautiful things, of which he would fain do the like—not to add to their number—but for his own vanity, that he also may be called an artist. Here is at once a singular and fatal difference. The childish nation sees nothing in its own past work to satisfy itself. It is pleased at having done this, but wants something better; it is struggling forward always to reach this better, this ideal conception. It wants more beauty to look at, it wants more subject to feel. It calls out to all its artists—stretching its hands to them as a little child does—"Oh, if you would but tell me another story,"—"Oh, if I might but have a doll with bluer eyes." That's the right temper to work in, and to get work done for you in. But the vain, aged, highly-educated nation is satiated with beautiful things—it has myriads more than it can look at; it has fallen into a habit of inattention; it passes weary and jaded through galleries which contain the best fruit of a thousand years of human travail; it gapes and shrugs over them, and pushes its way past them to the door.

8. But there is one feeling that is always distinct; however jaded and languid we may be in all other pleasures, we are never languid in vanity, and we would still paint and carve for fame. What other motive have the nations of Europe to-day? If they wanted art for art's sake they would take care of what they have already got. But at this instant the two noblest pictures in Venice are lying

Digitized by Google

rolled up in outhouses,[1] and the noblest portrait of Titian in existence is hung forty feet from the ground. We have absolutely no motive but vanity and the love of money—no others, as nations, than these, whatever we may have as individuals. And as the thirst of vanity thus increases, so the temptation to it. There was no fame of artists in these archaic days. Every year, every hour, saw some one rise to surpass what had been done before. And there was always better work to be done, but never any credit to be got by it. The artist lived in an atmosphere of perpetual, wholesome, inevitable eclipse. Do as well as you choose to-day,—make the whole Borgo dance with delight,[2] they would dance to a better man's pipe to-morrow. *Credette Cimabue nella pintura tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido.* This was the fate, the necessary fate, even of the strongest. They could only hope to be remembered as links in an endless chain. For the weaker men it was no use even to put their name on their works. They did not. If they could not work for joy and for love, and take their part simply in the choir of human toil, they might throw up their tools. But now it is far otherwise—now, the best having been done — and for a couple of hundred years, the best of us being confessed to have come short of it, everybody thinks that he may be the great man once again, and this is certain, that whatever in art is done for display, is invariably wrong.

9. But, secondly, consider the attractive power of false art, completed, as compared with imperfect art advancing to completion. Archaic work, so far as faultful, is repulsive, but advanced work is, in all its faults, attractive,

[1] [Ruskin considered the noblest picture in Venice to be the "Paradise" of Tintoret in the Ducal Palace; but he refers here to some of the pictures by Tintoret in the Scuola di San Rocco (see *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 87, Vol. XVIII. p. 460). See also *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 100; below, p. 145. "The noblest portrait of Titian" is probably the "Charles V." at Munich; Ruskin notices its being hung too high in Vol. VII. p. 495, and again in *The Cestus of Aglaia*, § 4 (below, p. 56).]

[2] [For the allusion to the Borgo Allegro, so called in consequence of the procession with Cimabue's picture, see Vol. III. p. 644, and Vol. XII. p. 98; and for the subsequent eclipse of Cimabue's fame by Giotto, see Vol. IV. p. 202 *n*. Ruskin again quotes the passage from Dante (*Purg.* xi. 94, 95)—"Cimabue thought to lord it over painting's field, and now the cry is Giotto's"—in *Mornings in Florence*, § 37.]

Digitized by Google

The moment that art has reached the point at which it becomes sensitively and delicately imitative, it appeals to a new audience. From that instant it addresses the sensualist and the idler. Its deceptions, its successes, its subtleties, become interesting to every condition of folly, of frivolity, and of vice. And this new audience brings to bear upon the art in which its foolish and wicked interest has been unhappily awakened, the full power of its riches: the largest bribes of gold as well as of praise are offered to the artist who will betray his art, until at last, from the sculpture of Phidias and fresco of Luini, it sinks into the cabinet ivory and the picture kept under lock and key. Between these highest and lowest types, there is a vast mass of merely imitative and delicately sensual sculpture; —veiled nymphs—chained slaves—soft goddesses seen by roselight through suspended curtains—drawing-room portraits and domesticities, and such like, in which the interest is either merely personal and selfish, or dramatic and sensational; in either case, destructive of the power of the public to sympathize with the aims of great architects.

10. Gentlemen,—I am no Puritan, and have never praised or advocated Puritanical art. The two pictures which I would last part with out of our National Gallery, if there were question of parting with any, would be Titian's Bacchus and Correggio's Venus.[1] But the noble naturalism of these was the fruit of ages of previous courage, continence, and religion—it was the fulness of passion in the life of a Britomart.[2] But the mid-age and old age of nations is not like the mid-age or old age of noble women. National decrepitude must be criminal. National death can only be by disease, and yet it is almost impossible, out of the history of the art of nations, to elicit the true conditions

[1] [For other references to Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," No. 35, see Vol. III. pp. 29, 33, 268; Vol. V. p. 167; Vol. VII. p. 117; and Vol. XII. p. 400. For "Correggio's Venus" ("The Education of Cupid," No. 10), see *Queen of the Air*, § 163 (below, p. 411); *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. pp. 181–182); *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*; and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 94.]

[2] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 62, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 119 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 118, 482).]

Digitized by Google

relating to its decline in any demonstrable manner. The history of Italian art is that of a struggle between superstition and naturalism on one side, between continence and sensuality on another. So far as naturalism prevailed over superstition, there is always progress; so far as sensuality over chastity, death. And the two contests are simultaneous. It is impossible to distinguish one victory from the other. Observe, however, I say victory over superstition, not over religion. Let me carefully define the difference. Superstition, in all times and among all nations, is the fear of a spirit whose passions are those of a man, whose acts are the acts of a man; who is present in some places, not in others; who makes some places holy and not others; who is kind to one person, unkind to another; who is pleased or angry according to the degree of attention you pay to him, or praise you refuse to him; who is hostile generally to human pleasure, but may be bribed by sacrifice of a part of that pleasure into permitting the rest. This, whatever form of faith it colours, is the essence of superstition. And religion is the belief in a Spirit whose mercies are over all His works—who is kind even to the unthankful and the evil;[1] who is everywhere present, and therefore is in no place to be sought, and in no place to be evaded; to whom all creatures, times, and things are everlastingly holy, and who claims—not tithes of wealth, nor sevenths of days—but all the wealth that we have, and all the days that we live, and all the beings that we are, but who claims that totality because He delights only in the delight of His creatures; and because, therefore, the one duty that they owe to Him, and the only service they can render Him, is to be happy. A Spirit, therefore, whose eternal benevolence cannot be angered, cannot be appeased; whose laws are everlasting and inexorable, so that heaven and earth must indeed pass away if one jot of them failed:[2] laws which attach to every wrong and error a measured, inevitable penalty; to

[1] [Psalms cxlv. 9; Luke vi. 35.]
[2] [Matthew v. 18.]

Digitized by Google

every rightness and prudence, an assured reward; penalty, of which the remittance cannot be purchased; and reward, of which the promise cannot be broken.

11. And thus, in the history of art, we ought continually to endeavour to distinguish (while, except in broadest lights, it is impossible to distinguish) the work of religion from that of superstition, and the work of reason from that of infidelity. Religion devotes the artist, hand and mind, to the service of the gods; superstition makes him the slave of ecclesiastical pride, or forbids his work altogether, in terror or disdain, Religion perfects the form of the divine statue, superstition distorts it into ghastly grotesque. Religion contemplates the gods as the lords of healing and life, surrounds them with glory of affectionate service, and festivity of pure human beauty. Superstition contemplates its idols as lords of death, appeases them with blood, and vows itself to them in torture and solitude. Religion proselytes by love, superstition by war; religion teaches by example, superstition by persecution. Religion gave granite shrine to the Egyptian, golden temple to the Jew, sculptured corridor to the Greek, pillared aisle and frescoed wall to the Christian. Superstition made idols of the splendours by which Religion had spoken: reverenced pictures and stones, instead of truths; letters and laws, instead of acts, and for ever, in various madness of fantastic desolation, kneels in the temple while it crucifies the Christ.

12. On the other hand, to reason resisting superstition, we owe the entire compass of modern energies and sciences; the healthy laws of life, and the possibilities of future progress. But to infidelity resisting religion (or which is often enough the case, taking the mask of it), we owe sensuality, cruelty, and war, insolence and avarice, modern political economy, life by conservation of forces, and salvation by every man's looking after his own interests; and, generally, whatsoever of guilt, and folly, and death, there is abroad among us. And of the two, a thousand-fold rather let us retain some colour of superstition, so that we may keep

Digitized by Google

also some strength of religion, than comfort ourselves with colour of reason for the desolation of godlessness. I would say to every youth who entered our schools—Be a Mahometan, a Diana-worshipper, a Fire-worshipper, Root-worshipper, if you will; but at least be so much a man as to know what worship means. I had rather, a million-fold rather, see you one of those "quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis numina,"[1] than one of those "quibus hæc *non* nascuntur in cordibus lumina"; and who are, by everlasting orphanage, divided from the Father of Spirits, who is also the Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift.[2]

18. "So much of man," I say, feeling profoundly that all right exercise of any human gift, so descended from the Giver of good, depends on the primary formation of the character of true manliness in the youth—that is to say, of a majestic, grave, and deliberate strength. How strange the words sound; how little does it seem possible to conceive of majesty, and gravity, and deliberation in the daily track of modern life. Yet, gentlemen, we need not hope that our work will be majestic if there is no majesty in ourselves. The word "manly" has come to mean practically, among us, a schoolboy's character, not a man's. We are, at our best, thoughtlessly impetuous, fond of adventure and excitement; curious in knowledge for its novelty, not for its system and results; faithful and affectionate to those among whom we are by chance cast, but gently and calmly insolent to strangers: we are stupidly conscientious, and instinctively brave, and always ready to cast away the lives we take no pains to make valuable, in causes of which we have never ascertained the justice. This is our highest type—notable peculiarly among nations for its gentleness, together with its courage; but in lower conditions it is especially liable to degradation by its love of jest and of vulgar sensation. It is against this fatal

[1] [See Juvenal, xv. 10 (speaking of Egypt, where the leek and onion were sacred): "O sanctas gentes quibus," etc.]
[2] [James i. 17.]

Digitized by Google

tendency to vile play that we have chiefly to contend. It is the spirit of Milton's *Comus;* bestial itself, but having power to arrest and paralyze all who come within its influence, even pure creatures sitting helpless, mocked by it on their marble thrones. It is incompatible, not only with all greatness of character, but with all true gladness of heart, and it develops itself in nations in proportion to their degradation, connected with a peculiar gloom and a singular tendency to play with death, which is a morbid reaction from the morbid excess.

14. A book has lately been published on the Mythology of the Rhine, with illustrations by Gustave Doré.[1] The Rhine god is represented in the vignette title-page with a pipe in one hand and a pot of beer in the other. You cannot have a more complete type of the tendency which is chiefly to be dreaded in this age than in this conception, as opposed to any possibility of representation of a river-god, however playful, in the mind of a Greek painter. The example is the more notable because Gustave Doré's is not a common mind, and, if born in any other epoch, he would probably have done valuable (though never first-rate) work; but by glancing (it will be impossible for you to do more than glance) at his illustrations of Balzac's *Contes Drôlatiques*,[2] you will see further how this "drôlatique," or semi-comic mask is, in the truth of it, the mask of a skull, and how the tendency to burlesque jest is both in France and England only an effervescence from the *cloaca maxima* of the putrid instincts which fasten themselves on national sin, and are in the midst of the luxury of European capitals, what Dante meant when he wrote "quel mi sveglio col puzzo," of the body of the Wealth-Siren;[3] the mocking levity and mocking gloom being equally signs of the death of the soul; just as, contrariwise, a passionate seriousness

[1] [Saintine, X. B.: *La Mythologie du Rhin, Illustrée par Gustave Doré*, 1862.]

[2] [See, for a further discussion of these illustrations, *Time and Tide*, § 30 (Vol. XVII. pp. 344–345).]

[3] [*Purgatorio*, xix. 33. On the Wealth-Siren, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 90 (Vol. XVII. pp. 211–212).]

Digitized by Google

and passionate joyfulness are signs of its full life in works such as those of Angelico, Luini, Ghiberti, or La Robbia.

It is to recover this stern seriousness, this pure and thrilling joy, together with perpetual sense of spiritual presence, that all true education of youth must now be directed. This seriousness, this passion, this universal human religion, are the first principles, the true roots of all art, as they are of all doing, of all being. Get this *vis viva*[1] first and all great work will follow. Lose it, and your schools of art will stand among other living schools as the frozen corpses stand by the winding stair of the St. Michael's Convent of Mont Cenis,[2] holding their hands stretched out under their shrouds, as if beseeching the passer-by to look upon the wasting of their death.

15. And all the higher branches of technical teaching are vain without this; nay, are in some sort vain altogether, for they are superseded by this. You may teach imitation, because the meanest man can imitate; but you can neither teach idealism nor composition, because only a great man can choose, conceive, or compose; and he does all these necessarily, and because of his nature.[3] His greatness is in his choice of things, in his analysis of them, and his combining powers involve the totality of his knowledge in life. His methods of observation and abstraction are essential habits of his thought, conditions of his being. If he looks at a human form he recognizes the signs of nobility in it, and loves them—hates whatever is diseased, frightful, sinful, or *designant* of decay. All ugliness, and abortion, and fading away; all signs of vice and foulness, he turns away from, as inherently diabolic and horrible; all signs of unconquered emotion he regrets, as weaknesses. He looks only for the calm purity of the human creature, in living conquests of its passions and of fate. That is idealism; but

[1] [Compare the use of the term in *Munera Pulveris*, § 134 (Vol. XVII. p. 259).]

[2] [For another description of the desiccated corpses on the staircase of the Sagra di San Michele, see Ruskin's letter of 1858 in Vol. VII. p. xlvi.]

[3] [Compare Vol. V. p. 189, and Vol. VII. p. 210.]

Digitized by Google

you cannot teach any one else that preference. Take a man who likes to see and paint the gambler's rage; the hedge-ruffian's enjoyment; the debauched soldier's strife; the vicious woman's degradation;—take a man fed on the dusty picturesque of rags and guilt; talk to him of principles of beauty! make him draw what you will, how you will, he will leave the stain of himself on whatever he touches. You had better go lecture to a snail, and tell it to leave no slime behind it. Try to make a mean man compose; you will find nothing in his thoughts consecutive or proportioned—nothing consistent in his sight—nothing in his fancy. He cannot comprehend two things in relation at once—how much less twenty! How much less all! Everything is uppermost with him in its turn, and each as large as the rest; but Titian or Veronese compose as tranquilly as they would speak—inevitably. The thing comes to them so—they see it so—rightly, and in harmony: they will not talk to you of composition, hardly even understanding how lower people see things otherwise, but knowing that if they *do* see otherwise, there is for them the end there, talk as you will.

16. I had intended, in conclusion, gentlemen, to incur such blame of presumption as might be involved in offering some hints for present practical methods in architectural schools, but here again I am checked, as I have been throughout, by a sense of the uselessness of all minor means, and helps, without the establishment of a true and broad educational system. My wish would be to see the profession of the architect united, not with that of the engineer, but of the sculptor. I think there should be a separate school and university course for engineers, in which the principal branches of study connected with that of practical building should be the physical and exact sciences, and honours should be taken in mathematics; but I think there should be another school and university course for the sculptor and architect, in which literature and philosophy should be the associated branches of study, and honours

Digitized by Google

should be taken *in literis humanioribus;* and I think a young architect's examination for his degree (for mere pass), should be much stricter than that of youths intending to enter other professions. The quantity of scholarship necessary for the efficiency of a country clergyman is not great. So that he be modest and kindly, the main truths he has to teach may be learned better in his heart than in books, and taught in very simple English. The best physicians I have known spent very little time in their libraries; and though my lawyer sometimes chats with me over a Greek coin, I think he regards the time so spent in the light rather of concession to my idleness than as helpful to his professional labours.

But there is no task undertaken by a true architect of which the honourable fulfilment will not require a range of knowledge and habitual feeling only attainable by advanced scholarship.

17. Since, however, such expansion of system is, at present, beyond hope, the best we can do is to render the studies undertaken in our schools thoughtful, reverent, and refined, according to our power. Especially, it should be our aim to prevent the minds of the students from being distracted by models of an unworthy or mixed character. A museum is one thing—a school another; and I am persuaded that as the efficiency of a school of literature depends on the mastering a few good books,[1] so the efficiency of a school of art will depend on the understanding a few good models. And so strongly do I feel this that I would, for my own part, at once consent to sacrifice my personal predilections in art, and to vote for the exclusion of all Gothic or Mediæval models whatsoever, if by this sacrifice I could obtain also the exclusion of Byzantine, Indian, Renaissance-French, and other more or less attractive but barbarous work; and thus concentrate the mind of the student wholly upon the study of natural form, and upon

[1] [See below, p. 146.]

Digitized by Google

its treatment by the sculptors and metal workers of Greece, Ionia, Sicily, and Magna Græcia, between 500 and 350 B.C. But I should hope that exclusiveness need not be carried quite so far. I think Donatello, Mino of Fiesole, the Robbias, Ghiberti, Verrocchio, and Michael Angelo, should be adequately represented in our schools—together with the Greeks—and that a few carefully chosen examples of the floral sculpture of the North in the thirteenth century should be added,[1] with especial view to display the treatment of naturalistic ornament in subtle connection with constructive requirements; and in the course of study pursued with reference to these models, as of admitted perfection, I should endeavour first to make the student thoroughly acquainted with the natural forms and characters of the objects he had to treat, and then to exercise him in the abstraction of these forms, and the suggestion of these characters, under due sculptural limitation. He should first be taught to draw largely and simply; then he should make quick and firm sketches of flowers, animals, drapery, and figures, from nature, in the simplest terms of line, and light and shade; always being taught to look at the organic, actions and masses, not at the textures or accidental effects of shade; meantime his sentiment respecting all these things should be cultivated by close and constant inquiry into their mythological significance and associated traditions; then, knowing the things and creatures thoroughly, and regarding them through an atmosphere of enchanted memory, he should be shown how the facts he has taken so long to learn are summed by a great sculptor in a few touches; how those touches are invariably arranged in musical and decorative relations; how every detail unnecessary for his purpose is refused; how those necessary for his purpose are insisted upon, or even exaggerated, or represented by singular artifice, when literal

[1] [These are schemes for Collections of Examples and for art-teaching which Ruskin afterwards carried out at Oxford: see Vol. XX.]

Digitized by Google

representation is impossible; and how all this is done under the instinct and passion of an inner commanding spirit which it is indeed impossible to imitate, but possible, perhaps, to share.

18. Perhaps! Pardon me that I speak despondingly. For my own part, I feel the force of mechanism and the fury of avaricious commerce to be at present so irresistible, that I have seceded from the study not only of architecture, but nearly of all art; and have given myself, as I would in a besieged city, to seek the best modes of getting bread and water for its multitudes, there remaining no question, it seems, to me, of other than such grave business for the time.[1] But there is, at least, this ground for courage, if not for hope: As the evil spirits of avarice and luxury are directly contrary to art, so, also, art is directly contrary to them; and according to its force, expulsive of them and medicinal against them; so that the establishment of such schools as I have ventured to describe—whatever their immediate success or ill success in the teaching of art—would yet be the directest method of resistance to those conditions of evil among which our youth are cast at the most critical period of their lives. We may not be able to produce architecture, but, at the least, we shall resist vice. I do not know if it has been observed that while Dante rightly connects architecture, as the most permanent expression of the pride of humanity, whether just or unjust, with the first cornice of Purgatory, he indicates its noble function by engraving upon it, in perfect sculpture, the stories which rebuke the errors and purify the purposes of noblest souls.[2] In the fulfilment of such function, literally and practically, here among men, is the only real use of pride of noble architecture, and on its acceptance or surrender of that function it depends whether, in future, the cities of England melt into a ruin more confused and ghastly than ever storm wasted or wolf

[1] [See the Introduction, above, pp. xxii.–xxiii.; and compare *Time and Tide*, § 69 (Vol. XVII. p. 376).]
[2] [See *Purgatorio*, xii.]

Digitized by Google

inhabited, or purge and exalt themselves into true habitations of men, whose walls shall be Safety, and whose gates shall be Praise.[1]

NOTE.[2]—In the course of the discussion which followed this paper the meeting was addressed by Professor Donaldson, who alluded to the architectural improvements in France under the third Napoleon, by Mr. George Edmund Street, by Professor Kerr, Mr. Digby Wyatt, and others. The President then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Ruskin, who, in acknowledging the high compliment paid him, said he would detain the meeting but a few minutes, but he felt he ought to make some attempt to explain what he had inefficiently stated in his paper; and there was hardly anything said in the discussion in which he did not concur: the supposed differences of opinion were either because he had ill-expressed himself, or because of things left unsaid. In the first place he was surprised to hear dissent from Professor Donaldson while he expressed his admiration of some of the changes which had been developed in modern architecture.[3] There were two conditions of architecture adapted for different climates; one with narrow streets, calculated for shade; another for broad avenues beneath bright skies; but both conditions had their beautiful effects. He sympathized with the admirers of Italy, and he was delighted with Genoa. He had been delighted also by the view of the long vistas from the Tuileries. Mr. Street had showed[4] that he had not sufficiently dwelt on the distinction between near and distant carving—between carving and sculpture. He (Mr. Ruskin) could allow of no distinction. Sculpture which was to be viewed at a height of 500 feet above the eye might be executed with a few touches of the chisel; opposed to that there was the exquisite finish which was the perfection of sculpture, as displayed in the Greek statues, after a full knowledge of the whole nature of the object portrayed; both styles were admirable in their true application—both were "sculpture"—perfect according to their places and requirements. The attack of Professor Kerr he regarded as in play,[5] and in that spirit he would reply to him that he was afraid a practical association with bricks and mortar would hardly produce the effects upon him which had been suggested,

[1] [Isaiah lx. 18.]

[2] [Thus printed in *On the Old Road*, which summarises the other proceedings and quotes Ruskin's speech from the *Sessional Proceedings*.]

[3] [Professor Donaldson had admired the noble avenues which the Emperor of the French was making in Paris, and this remark was greeted with cries of "No, No"; Mr. Street subsequently protested against this praise of modern Paris, and said that his favourite city, from an architectural point of view, was Genoa, "where there was only one street more than half the width of this room."]

[4] [The criticism referred to—that "they should draw the line between carving and sculpture"—was, however, made in fact by Professor Donaldson.]

[5] [Professor Kerr had argued that talk about the poetry of architecture was all very well in a writer, but that it would not do in business: "he could not help thinking that if they were to set Mr. Ruskin up as an architect in an office in Whitehall, and give him plenty of work to do, he would change his opinion." Professor Kerr asked what was the good of theorising? "Mr. Ruskin said that during the last fifty years there had been more philosophy expended upon art than in all the

Digitized by Google

for having of late in his residence[1] experienced the transition of large extents of ground into bricks and mortar, it had had no effect in changing his views; and when he said he was tired of writing upon art,[2] it was not that he was ashamed of what he had written, but that he was tired of writing in vain, and of knocking his head, thick as it might be, against a wall. There was another point which he would answer very gravely. It was referred to by Mr. Digby Wyatt, and was the one point he had mainly at heart all through—viz., that religion and high morality were at the root of all great art in all great times. The instances referred to by Mr. Digby Wyatt did not counteract that proposition.[3] Modern and ancient forms of life might be different, nor could all men be judged by formal canons, but a true human heart was in the breast of every really great artist. He had the greatest detestation of anything approaching to cant in respect of art; but, after long investigation of the historical evidence, as well as of the metaphysical laws bearing on this question, he was absolutely certain that a high moral and religious training was the only way to get good fruits from our youth; make them good men first, and only so, if at all, they would become good artists. With regard to the points mooted respecting the practical and poetical uses of architecture, he thought they did not sufficiently define their terms; they spoke of poetry as rhyme. He thanked the President for his definition to-night,[4] and he was sure he would concur with him that poetry meant as its derivation implied—"the *doing*."[5] What was rightly done was done for ever, and that which was only a crude work for the time was not poetry; poetry was only that which would recreate or remake the human soul. In that sense poetical architecture was separated from all utilitarian work. He had said long ago[6] men could not decorate their shops and counters; they could decorate only where they lived in peace and rest—where they existed to be happy. There ornament would find use, and there their "doing" would be permanent. In other cases they wasted their money if they attempted to make utilitarian work ornamental. He might be wrong in that principle, but he had always asserted it, and had seen no reason in recent works for any modification of it. He thanked the meeting sincerely for the honour they had conferred upon him by their invitation to address them that evening, and for the indulgence with which they had heard him.

centuries before. (Mr. Ruskin: In writings upon art). Yes; but writing and speaking ran in the same channel. He averred, also, that it produced no effect upon the public, and this they would all admit. But what were the consequences of that gentleman's own artistic philosophy upon himself—the philosopher? That he was sick and tired of such poetic art, and had turned in despair to prosaic political economy."]

[1] [Denmark Hill.]

[2] [See above, § 4, p. 23.]

[3] [Mr. Wyatt had said, "His own faith in Mr. Ruskin's theory that good men only could do good work in any department of art, was greatly shaken by his recollection of the nature of the lives of the artists Titian and Correggio, whose works had been held forth as models."]

[4] [The President (the Rt. Hon. A. J. Beresford-Hope) had said "prose is thought expressed in the best words, while poetry is thought expressed in the best words, and each word in the best place."]

[5] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 29).]

[6] [See *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 156–158.]

Digitized by Google

III

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

(1865, 1866)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

By JOHN RUSKIN

GEORGE ALLEN
LONDON AND ORPINGTON
1905

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The papers entitled *The Cestus of Aglaia* first appeared in the *Art Journal* in 1865 and 1866:—

"Prefatory" in the number for January 1865, New Series, vol. iv. pp. 5–6.

"Chapter I." in the number for February 1865, vol. iv. pp. 33–35.

"Chapter II." in the number for March 1865, vol. iv. pp. 73–74.

"Chapter III." in the number for April 1865, vol. iv. pp. 101–102.

"Chapter IV." in the number for May 1865, vol. iv. pp. 129, 130.

"Chapter V." in the number for June 1865, vol. iv. pp. 177, 178.

"Chapter VI." in the number for July 1865, vol. iv. pp. 197–199.

"Chapter VII." in the number for January 1866, New Series, vol. v. pp. 9, 10.

"Chapter VIII." in the number for February 1866, vol. v. pp. 33, 34.

"Chapter IX." in the number for April 1866, vol. v. pp. 97, 98.

Papers I., II., VI., VII., VIII., and IX. were signed "John Ruskin"; III. and IV., "J. Ruskin"; V. was (by inadvertence, no doubt) not signed.

Portions of the papers were reprinted (with slight alterations) in 1869 in *The Queen of the Air*, as follow:—

Chapter ii. (§§ 22–29, part) as §§ 135–142 of that work.

Chapter v. (§ 68) and Chapter vi. (§§ 69–85) as §§ 143–159.

A small portion of the papers (§§ 40 and 41) was also printed in *Ariadne Florentina* (§§ 115 and 116).

The Cestus of Aglaia, with the omission of the passages which had thus been used in *The Queen of the Air*, was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 439–546 (§§ 316–404); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. ii. pp. 41–150 (§§ 25–113).

In this edition the essays are for the first time reprinted in their complete original form; the paragraphs being numbered consecutively. A title-page and a list of contents are here added by the editors. The titles follow the author's words in the text, wherever possible.

Variæ Lectiones.—There are few variations in the text to record, except in the case of the portions of the essays which were used in *The Queen of the Air* and *Ariadne Florentina*. On the principle, observed throughout this edition, of printing the text as last revised by the author, the corrections made by Ruskin, when using portions of the *Cestus* for those books, are here embodied in the text; but where such corrections were made only because of references to earlier passages of the *Cestus*, or for purposes of curtailment in the new context, the original text (and not that of *The Queen of the Air*) has been adopted. The more interesting of the variations thus resulting are noted under the text, and to them only a reference is here given. The reprint of the other papers in *On the Old Road* was not corrected by Ruskin himself. A few typographical errors crept in,

Digitized by Google

and the original text is here given. A few minor differences of spelling and punctuation are not included in the following list:—

Chapter ii.—§ 22, line 2, *Queen of the Air* reads "insist . . . on this" for "return . . . , for a little while to"; line 12, see p. 72 *n.*

§ 23, line 8, *Cestus* reads "window jewels" for "jewels in the windows"; line 13, *Cestus* reads "metamorphosism."

§ 25, line 9, *Cestus* reads "all those peculiar" for "peculiarly"; line 10, *Queen of the Air* omits "of which I spoke in the prefatory chapter."

§ 28, line 15, see p. 79 *n.*; lines 22, 23, *Cestus* reads "according to their modesty . . . all other modes of musical art"; last lines, "concent" was printed "consent" in the *Art Journal* and *Queen of the Air.*

Chapter iii.—§ 33, line 11, "ante-chamber" for "ante-chambers" in *On the Old Road.*

§ 40, line 4, see p. 90 *n.*; line 8, *Cestus* reads "perhaps they think" for "that" (in *Ariadne*); line 11, see p. 91 *n.*; fourth line from end, the italics are introduced from *Ariadne.*

Chapter iv.—§ 49, line 10, "note" was misprinted "not" in the *Art Journal* and *On the Old Road;* line 15, "undignified" was misprinted "undignd" in the *Art Journal.*

§ 50, line 9, "Greek" was misprinted "Greeks" in the *Art Journal* and *On the Old Road.*

Chapter v.—§ 66, line 49, "Jérome" here corrected to "Gérome."

Chapter vi.—§ 70, lines 3, 4, see p. 120 *n.*

§ 73, lines 8–13, see p. 122 *n.*; lines 19–35, see p. 122 *n.*; lines 36–38, see p. 122 *n.*

§ 74, line 4, *Cestus* reads "raise" for "exalt"; line 25, *Cestus* reads "and digesting" after "digging."

§ 75, lines 10, 16, see p. 124 *n.*

§ 79, line 33, see p. 126 *n.*

§ 80, line 6, see p. 127 *n.*; line 37, *Cestus* reads "gneissose" for "gneiss and slate."

§ 81, line 2, see p. 128 *n.*; line 4, "it" (in *Cestus* and eds. 1–3 of *Queen of the Air*) has been accidentally omitted in all later issues of that book; line 8, the words "(Pope's 'blue transparent Wandle')" were inserted in the 1883 edition of *Queen of the Air.*

§ 82, line 8, *Cestus* reads "bullets" for "shot"; line 16, *Cestus* adds "the fact is, that" after "for"; lines 22, 25, 30, see p. 129 *n.*

§ 83, lines 3, 4, *Cestus* does not give "though unhappily," and in the next line begins a new sentence after "progress"; line 17, *Cestus* reads "unites" for "united"; lines 23–25, *Cestus* reads ". . . does not see his strength because of the chastened . . . does not recognise his . . ."; line 38, see p. 130 *n.*; seventh line from end, see p. 131 *n.*; last line, *Cestus* reads "yet" after "remaining."

§ 84, line 10, *Cestus* reads "and shapes" after "educates"; line 19, *Cestus* reads "heels" for "will"; lines 25, 26, see p. 132 *n.*

§ 85, footnote, see p. 132 *n.*; line 15, see p. 133 *n.*

Chapter ix.—§ 111, line 10, *On the Old Road* misprints "state" for "stage" (see line 15).]

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	Prefatory	49
CHAP.		
I.	The Black Outline	59
II.	Modesty	72
III.	Patience	82
IV.	Haste	95
V.	"Rembrandt, and Strong Waters"	107
VI.	Liberty	120
VII.	The Limits of Material	135
VIII.	Public and Private Art	141
IX.	The Three Kinds of Engraving	150

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE CESTUS OF AGLAIA

"Ποικίλον, ᾧ ἔνι πάντα τετεύχαται· οὐδέ σέ φημι
Ἄπρηκτόν γε νέεσθαι, ὅ τι φρεσὶ σῇσι μενοινᾷς."
(Hom. *Il.* xiv. 220–221.[1])

PREFATORY[2]

1. Not many months ago, a friend, whose familiarity with both living and past schools of Art rendered his opinion of great authority, said casually to me in the course of talk, "I believe we have now as able painters as ever lived; but they never paint as good pictures as were once painted." That was the substance of his saying; I forget the exact words, but their tenor surprised me, and I have thought much of them since. Without pressing the statement too far, or examining it with an unintended strictness, this I believe to be at all events true, that we have men among us, now in Europe, who might have been noble painters, and are not; men whose doings are altogether as wonderful in skill, as inexhaustible in fancy, as the work of the really great painters; and yet these doings of theirs are not great. Shall I write the commonplace that rings in sequence in my ear, and draws on my hand—"are not Great, for they are not (in the broad human and ethical sense) Good"? I write it, and ask forgiveness for the truism, with its implied uncharitableness of blame; for this trite thing is ill

[1] [From the passage in which Aphrodite presents her *cestus* or girdle to Hera: "Take now this broidered girdle, *in which are all things wrought;* and I tell you that you shall not return with aught that is in your mind unaccomplished." The words here italicised seem to have special reference to Ruskin's title: see above, Introduction, p. lxiii.]

[2] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 5–6. January 1856.]

Digitized by Google

understood and little thought upon by any of us, and the implied blame is divided among us all; only let me at once partly modify it, and partly define.

2. In one sense, modern Art has more goodness in it than ever Art had before. Its kindly spirit, its quick sympathy with pure domestic and social feeling, the occasional seriousness of its instructive purpose, and its honest effort to grasp the reality of conceived scenes, are all eminently "good," as compared with the insane picturesqueness and conventional piety of many among the old masters. Such domestic painting, for instance, as Richter's in Germany, Edward Frère's in France, and Hook's in England,[1] together with such historical and ideal work as——perhaps the reader would be offended with me were I to set down the several names that occur to me here, so I will set down one only, and say—as that of Paul de la Roche; such work, I repeat, as these men have done, or are doing, is entirely good in its influence on the public mind; and may, in thankful exultation, be compared with the renderings of besotted, vicious, and vulgar human life perpetrated by Dutch painters, or with the deathful formalism and fallacy of what was once called "Historical Art."[2] Also, this gentleness and veracity of theirs, being in part communicable, are gradually learned, though in a somewhat servile manner, yet not without a sincere sympathy, by many inferior painters, so that our exhibitions and currently popular books are full of very lovely and pathetic ideas, expressed with a care, and appealing to an interest, quite unknown in past times. I will take two instances of merely average power, as more illustrative of what I mean than any more singular and distinguished work could be. Last year, in the British Institution, there were two pictures

[1] [For Richter, see Vol. III. p. 264, Vol. IV. p. 356, Vol. XIV. p. 361, and Vol. XV. pp. 204, 224; for Frère, Vol. XIV. pp. 142, 174, 347, and compare "Flamboyant Architecture," below, pp. 249, 270; for Hook, the passages indexed at Vol. XIV. p. 317; and for Paul Delaroche, below, p. 205, Vol. III. p. 199, Vol. XIV. p. 488, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 35.]

[2] [For the vulgarity of the Dutch school, see Vol. VII. pp. 363 *seq.*; and for "Historical Art," Vol. XII. pp. 151–152.]

Digitized by Google

by the same painter, one of a domestic, the other of a sacred subject.[1] I will say nothing of the way in which they were painted; it may have been bad, or good, or neither: it is not to my point. I wish to direct attention only to the conception of them. One, "Cradled in his Calling," was of a fisherman and his wife, and helpful grown-up son, and helpless new-born little one; the two men carrying the young child up from the shore, rocking it between them in the wet net for a hammock, the mother looking on joyously, and the baby laughing. The thought was pretty and good, and one might go on dreaming over it long—not unprofitably. But the second picture was more interesting. I describe it only in the circumstances of the invented scene—sunset after the crucifixion. The bodies have been taken away, and the crosses are left lying on the broken earth; a group of children have strayed up the hill, and stopped beside them in such shadowy awe as is possible to childhood, and they have picked up one or two of the drawn nails to feel how sharp they are. Meantime a girl with her little brother—goat-herds both—have been watering their flock at Kidron, and are driving it home. The girl, strong in grace and honour of youth, carrying her pitcher of water on her erect head, has gone on past the place steadily, minding her flock; but her little curly-headed brother, with cheeks of burning Eastern brown, has lingered behind to look, and is feeling the point of one of the nails, held in another child's hand. A lovely little kid of the goats has stayed behind to keep him company, and is amusing itself by jumping backwards and forwards over an arm of the cross. The sister looks back, and, wondering what he can have stopped in that dreadful place for, waves her hand for the little boy to come away.

I have no hesitation in saying that, as compared with

[1] [By Philip Richard Morris, A.R.A. (1833–1902). A woodcut of "Cradled in his Calling" appeared in the *Art Journal* for June 1872, N.S., vol. xi. p. 162; of the other picture, entitled "Where they Crucified Him," a steel engraving (by J. C. Armytage) appeared in the same journal for October 1868, N.S., vol. vii. p. 200.]

Digitized by Google

the ancient and stereotyped conceptions of the "Taking down from the Cross," there is a living feeling in that picture which is of great price. It may perhaps be weak, nay, even superficial, or untenable—that will depend on the other conditions of character out of which it springs—but, so far as it reaches, it is pure and good; and we may gain more by looking thoughtfully at such a picture than at any even of the least formal types of the work of older schools. It would be unfair to compare it with first-rate, or even approximately first-rate designs; but even accepting such unjust terms, put it beside Rembrandt's ghastly white sheet, laid over the two poles at the Cross-foot,[1] and see which has most good in it for you of any communicable kind.

8. I trust, then, that I fully admit whatever may, on due deliberation, be alleged in favour of modern Art. Nay, I have heretofore asserted more for some modern Art than others were disposed to admit, nor do I withdraw one word from such assertion. But when all has been said and granted that may be, there remains this painful fact to be dealt with,—the consciousness, namely, both in living artists themselves and in us their admirers, that something, and that not a little, is wrong with us; that they, relentlessly examined, could not say they thoroughly knew how to paint, and that we, relentlessly examined, could not say we thoroughly know to judge. The best of our painters will look a little to us, the beholders, for confirmation of his having done well. We, appealed to, look to each other to see what we ought to say. If we venture to find fault, however submissively, the artist will probably feel a little uncomfortable: he will by no means venture to meet us with a serenely crushing "Sir, it cannot be better done," in the manner of Albert Dürer.[2] And yet, if it could not

[1] [The reference is to Rembrandt's etching of "The Descent from the Cross," in which the poles with the white sheet occupy the foreground (see No. 90 in Dutuit's *L'Œuvre Complet de Rembrandt.*]

[2] [For other passages where Ruskin cites this saying, see Vol. V. p. 331; Vol. VI. p. 159; Vol. XI. p. 14; Vol. XIII. p. 423; Vol. XIV. p. 393; and compare § 22, below, p. 72.]

Digitized by Google

be better done, he, of all men, should know that best, nor fear to say so; it is good for himself, and for us, that he should assert that, if he knows that. The last time my dear old friend William Hunt came to see me, I took down one of his early drawings for him to see (three blue plums and one amber one, and two nuts). So he looked at it, happily, for a minute or two and then said, "Well, it's very nice, isn't it? I did not think I could have done so well."[1] The saying was entirely right, exquisitely modest and true; only I fear he would not have had the courage to maintain that his drawing was good, if anybody had been there to say otherwise. Still, having done well, he knew it; and what is more no man ever does do well without knowing it: he may not know *how* well, nor be conscious of the best of his own qualities; nor measure, or care to measure, the relation of his power to that of other men, but he will know that what he has done is, in an intended, accomplished, and ascertainable degree, good. Every able and honest workman, as he wins a right to rest, so he wins a right to approval,—his own if no one's beside; nay, his only true rest *is* in the calm consciousness that the thing has been honourably done—*συνείδησις ὅτι καλόν*. I do not use the Greek words in pedantry, I want them for future service and interpretation;[2] no English words, nor any of any other language, would do as well. For I mean to try to show, and believe I *can* show, that a simple and sure conviction of our having done rightly is not only an attainable, but a necessary seal and sign of our having so done; and that the doing well or rightly, and ill or wrongly, are both conditions of the whole being of each person, coming of a nature in him which affects all things that he may do, from the least to the greatest, according to the noble old phrase for the conquering rightness, of "integrity," "wholeness," or "wholesomeness." So that when we do external things (that are our business) ill, it is a sign that internal,

[1] [For another account of this conversation, see Vol. XIV. p. 445.]
[2] [See below, § 27, p. 78; and also § 24 *n.*, p. 75: a passage from the MS. which Ruskin afterwards omitted.]

Digitized by Google

and, in fact, that all things, are ill with us; and when we do external things well, it is a sign that internal and all things are well with us. And I believe there are two principal adversities to this wholesomeness of work, and to all else that issues out of wholeness of inner character, with which we have in these days specially to contend. The first is the variety of Art round us, tempting us to thoughtless imitation; the second our own want of belief in the existence of a rule of right.

4. (I.) I say the first is the variety of Art around us. No man can pursue his own track in peace, nor obtain consistent guidance, if doubtful of his track. All places are full of inconsistent example, all mouths of contradictory advice, all prospects of opposite temptations. The young artist sees myriads of things he would like to do, but cannot learn from their authors how they were done, nor choose decisively any method which he may follow with the accuracy and confidence necessary to success. He is not even sure if his thoughts are his own; for the whole atmosphere round him is full of floating suggestion: those which are his own he cannot keep pure, for he breathes a dust of decayed ideas, wreck of the souls of dead nations, driven by contrary winds. He may stiffen himself (and all the worse for him) into an iron self-will, but if the iron has any magnetism in it, he cannot pass a day without finding himself, at the end of it, instead of sharpened or tempered, covered with a ragged fringe of iron filings. If there be anything better than iron—living wood fibre—in him, he cannot be allowed any natural growth, but gets hacked in every extremity, and bossed over with lumps of frozen clay;—grafts of incongruous blossom that will never set; while some even recognise no need of knife or clay (though both are good in a gardener's hand), but deck themselves out with incongruous glittering, like a Christmas tree. Even were the style chosen true to his own nature, and persisted in, there is harm in the very eminence of the models set before him at the beginning of his career.

Digitized by Google

If he feels their power, they make him restless and impatient, it may be despondent, it may be madly and fruitlessly ambitious. If he does not feel it, he is sure to be struck by what is weakest or slightest of their peculiar qualities; fancies that *this* is what they are praised for; tries to catch the trick of it; and whatever easy vice or mechanical habit the master may have been betrayed or warped into, the unhappy pupil watches and adopts, triumphant in its ease:—has not sense to steal the peacock's feather, but imitates its voice. Better for him, far better, never to have seen what had been accomplished by others, but to have gained gradually his own quiet way, or at least with his guide only a step in advance of him, and the lantern low on the difficult path. Better even, it has lately seemed, to be guideless and lightless; fortunate those who, by desolate effort, trying hither and thither, have groped their way to some independent power. So, from Cornish rock, from St. Giles's Lane, from Thames mudshore, you get your Prout, your Hunt, your Turner;[1] not, indeed, any of them well able to spell English, nor taught so much of their own business as to lay a colour safely; but yet at last, or first, doing somehow something, wholly ineffective on the national mind, yet real, and valued at last after they are dead, in money;—valued otherwise not even at so much as the space of dead brick wall it would cover; their work being left for years packed in parcels at the National Gallery, or hung conclusively out of sight under the shadowy iron vaults of Kensington.[2] The men themselves, quite inarticulate, determine nothing of their Art, interpret nothing of their own minds; teach perhaps a trick or two of their stage business in early life—as, for instance, that

[1] [Prout was born in Plymouth (Vol. XII. p. 305), but taken early to Cornwall (*ibid.*, p. 308). William Hunt was born in Belton Street (now Endell Street), Long Acre, as appears from the register of his baptism at St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, and he lived in London (Vol. XIV. p. 374). For the early surroundings of Turner (born in Maiden Lane, almost within a stone's-throw of the river), see Vol. VII. pp. 376–377.]

[2] [For this neglect of the Turner drawings, see Vol. XIII. pp. xli. *seq.*; and compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 101 (Vol. XVIII. p. 149).]

Digitized by Google

it is good where there is much black to break it with white, and where there is much white to break it with black, etc., etc.; in later life remain silent altogether, or speak only in despair (fretful or patient according to their character); one who might have been among the best of them,[1] the last we heard of, finding refuge for an entirely honest heart from a world which declares honesty to be impossible, only in a madness nearly as sorrowful as its own;—the religious madness which makes a beautiful soul ludicrous and ineffectual; and so passes away, bequeathing for our inheritance from its true and strong life, a pretty song about a tiger, another about a bird-cage, two or three golden couplets, which no one will ever take the trouble to understand,—the spiritual portrait of the ghost of a flea, —and the critical opinion that "the unorganized blots of Rubens and Titian are not Art."[2] Which opinion the public mind perhaps not boldly indorsing, is yet incapable of pronouncing adversely to it, that the said blots of Titian and Rubens *are* Art, perceiving for itself little good in them, and hanging *them* also well out of its way, at tops of walls (Titian's portrait of Charles V. at Munich, for example; Tintoret's Susannah, and Veronese's Magdalen, in the Louvre[3]), that it may have room and readiness for what may be generally termed "railroad work," bearing on matters more immediately in hand; said public looking to the present pleasure of its fancy, and the portraiture of itself in official and otherwise imposing or entertaining circumstances, as the only "Right" cognizable by it.

[1] [For a further mention of William Blake, see below, §§ 67, 85 (pp. 117, 133). Ruskin here refers to the song in *Songs of Experience* ("Tiger, tiger, burning bright") and to *Auguries of Innocence* ("A Robin Redbreast in a cage"). For "golden couplets," quoted from Blake, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 21 (from the *Book of Thel*), and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 74 (from *Auguries of Innocence*). For other references to the poet-painter, see Vol. V. pp. 138, 323; Vol. VIII. p. 256 *n.*; Vol. XIV. pp. 354–355; and Vol. XV. p. 223.]

[2] [For a reproduction of the Ghost of a Flea, see Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake*, 1863, vol. i. p. 255; and for the opinion on Rubens and Titian, *ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 149.]

[3] [On the "skying" of Titian's "Charles V.," see above, p. 28 *n.*; for similar criticisms on the Louvre, see Vol. XII. pp. 411, 472. The Tintoret is now hung on the line.]

Digitized by Google

5. (II.) And this is a deeper source of evil, by far, than the former one, for though it is ill for us to strain towards a right for which we have never ripened it is worse for us to believe in no right at all. "Anything," we say, "that a clever man can do to amuse us is good; what does not amuse us we do not want. Taste is assuredly a frivolous, apparently a dangerous gift; vicious persons and vicious nations have it; we are a practical people, content to know what we like, wise in not liking it too much, and when tired of it, wise in getting something we like better. Painting is of course an agreeable ornamental Art, maintaining a number of persons respectably, deserving therefore encouragement, and getting it pecuniarily, to a hitherto unheard-of extent. What would you have more?" This is, I believe, very nearly our Art-creed. The fact being (very ascertainably by any one who will take the trouble to examine the matter), that there is a cultivated Art among all great nations, inevitably necessary to them as the fulfilment of one part of their human nature. None but savage nations are without Art, and civilized nations who do their Art ill, do it because there is something deeply wrong at their hearts. They paint badly as a paralysed man stammers, because his life is touched somewhere within; when the deeper life is full in a people, they speak clearly and rightly; paint clearly and rightly; think clearly and rightly. There is some reverse effect, but very little. Good pictures do not teach a nation; they are the signs of its having been taught. Good thoughts do not form a nation; it must be formed before it can think them. Let it once decay at the heart, and its good work and good thoughts will become subtle luxury and aimless sophism; and it and they will perish together.

6. It is my purpose, therefore, in some subsequent papers, with such help as I may anywise receive,[1] to try if there may not be determined some of the simplest laws which are

[1] [Ruskin, as will be seen, hoped that his papers would provoke correspondence: see below, pp. 70, 134.]

Digitized by Google

indeed binding on Art practice and judgment. Beginning with elementary principle, and proceeding upwards as far as guiding laws are discernible, I hope to show, that if we do not yet know them, there are at least such laws to be known, and that it is of a deep and intimate importance to any people, especially to the English at this time, that their children should be sincerely taught whatever arts they learn, and in riper age become capable of a just choice and wise pleasure in the accomplished works of the artist. But I earnestly ask for help in this task. It is one which can only come to good issue by the consent and aid of many thinkers; and I would, with the permission of the Editor of this Journal, invite debate on the subject of each paper, together with brief and clear statements of consent or objection, with name of consentor or objector; so that after courteous discussion had, and due correction of the original statement, we may get something at last set down, as harmoniously believed by such and such known artists. If nothing can thus be determined, at least the manner and variety of dissent will show whether it is owing to the nature of the subject, or to the impossibility, under present circumstances, that different persons should approach it from similar points of view; and the inquiry, whatever its immediate issue, cannot be ultimately fruitless.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER I[1]

[THE BLACK OUTLINE]

7. Our knowledge of human labour, if intimate enough, will, I think, mass it for the most part into two kinds—mining and moulding; the labour that seeks for things, and the labour that shapes them. Of these the last should be always orderly, for we ought to have some conception of the whole of what we have to make before we try to make any part of it; but the labour of seeking must be often methodless, following the veins of the mine as they branch, or trying for them where they are broken. And the mine, which we would now open into the souls of men, as they govern the mysteries of their handicrafts, being rent into many dark and divided ways, it is not possible to map our work beforehand, or resolve on its directions. We will not attempt to bind ourselves to any methodical treatment of our subject, but will get at the truths of it here and there, as they seem extricable; only, though we cannot know to what depth we may have to dig, let us know clearly what we are digging for. We desire to find by what rule some Art is called good, and other Art bad: we desire to find the conditions of character in the artist which are essentially connected with the goodness of his work: we desire to find what are the methods of practice which form this character or corrupt it; and finally, how the formation or corruption of this character is connected with the general prosperity of nations.

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv., pp. 33–35, February 1865. The first word being printed in plain capitals instead of with an ornamental initial letter generally used by the *Art Journal*, the following note was added by the author: "I beg the Editor's and reader's pardon for an informality in the type; but I shrink from ornamental letters, and have begged for a legible capital instead."]

Digitized by Google

8. And all this we want to learn practically: not for mere pleasant speculation on things that have been; but for instant direction of those that are yet to be. My first object is to get at some fixed principles for the teaching of Art to our youth; and I am about to ask, of all who may be able to give me a serviceable answer, and with and for all who are anxious for such answer, what arts should be generally taught to the English boy and girl,—by what methods,—and to what ends? How well, or how imperfectly, our youth of the higher classes should be disciplined in the practice of music and painting?—how far, among the lower classes, exercise in certain mechanical arts might become a part of their school life?[1]—how far, in the adult life of this nation, the Fine Arts may advisably supersede or regulate the mechanical Arts? Plain questions these, enough; clearly also important ones; and, as clearly, boundless ones—mountainous—infinite in contents—only to be mined into in a scrambling manner by poor inquirers, as their present tools and sight may serve.

9. I have often been accused of dogmatism,[2] and confess to the holding strong opinions on some matters; but I tell the reader in sincerity, and entreat him in sincerity to believe, that I do not think myself able to dictate anything positive respecting questions of this magnitude. The one thing I am sure of is, the need of some form of dictation; or, where that is as yet impossible, at least of consistent experiment, for the just solution of doubts which present themselves every day in more significant and more impatient temper of interrogation.

Here is one, for instance, lying at the base of all the rest—namely, what may be the real dignity of mechanical Art itself? I cannot express the amazed awe, the crushed humility, with which I sometimes watch a locomotive take

[1] [For the place of music in education, see *Time and Tide*, § 61 (Vol. XVII. p. 368); and for drawing, Vol. XVI. p. xxix.]

[2] [See Preface to *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 5); and compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 85.]

Digitized by Google

its breath at a railway station, and think what work there is in its bars and wheels, and what manner of men they must be who dig brown iron-stone out of the ground, and forge it into THAT! What assemblage of accurate and mighty faculties in them; more than fleshly power over melting crag and coiling fire, fettered, and finessed at last into the precision of watchmaking; Titanian hammer-strokes beating, out of lava, these glittering cylinders and timely-respondent valves, and fine ribbed rods, which touch each other as a serpent writhes, in noiseless gliding, and omnipotence of grasp; infinitely complex anatomy of active steel, compared with which the skeleton of a living creature would seem, to a careless observer, clumsy and vile—a mere morbid secretion and phosphatous prop of flesh! What would the men who thought out this—who beat it out, who touched it into its polished calm of power, who set it to its appointed task, and triumphantly saw it fulfil this task to the utmost of their will—feel or think about this weak hand of mine, timidly leading a little stain of water-colour, which I cannot manage, into an imperfect shadow[1] of something else—mere failure in every motion, and endless disappointment; what, I repeat, would these Iron-dominant Genii think of me? and what ought I to think of them?[2]

10. But as I reach this point of reverence, the unreasonable thing is sure to give a shriek as of a thousand unanimous vultures, which leaves me shuddering in real physical pain for some half minute following; and assures me, during slow recovery, that a people which can endure such fluting and piping among them is not likely soon to have

[1] [Compare Ruskin's frequent application of Shakespeare's line, "The best in this kind are but shadows"; *Aratra Pentelici*, § 142; *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 39, 148; *Ariadne Florentina*, § 256.]

[2] ["It will not be easy," says Professor P. Geddes, F.R.S., in quoting this passage, "to find any panegyric of machines and their makers, though the age is rich in such literature, to match this, combining, as it does, the scientific appreciation of Babbage's classic *Economy of Machines and Manufactures*, with the artistic appreciation which we find in the Surfaceman's [Alex. Anderson] *Songs of the Rail*" (*John Ruskin, Economist*, p. 21).]

Digitized by Google

its modest ear pleased by aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song.[1] Perhaps I am then led on into meditation respecting the spiritual nature of the Tenth Muse, who invented this gracious instrument, and guides its modulation by stokers' fingers; meditation, also, as to the influence of her invention amidst the other parts of the Parnassian melody of English education. Then it cannot but occur to me to inquire how far this modern "pneuma," Steam, may be connected with other pneumatic powers talked of in that old religious literature, of which we fight so fiercely to keep the letters bright, and the working valves, so to speak, in good order (while we let the steam of it all carefully off into the cold condenser), what connection, I say, this modern "spiritus," in its valve-directed inspiration, has with that more ancient spiritus, or warm breath, which people used to think they might be "born of."[2] Whether, in fine, there be any such thing as an entirely human Art, with spiritual motive power, and signal as of human voice, distinct inherently from this mechanical Art, with its mechanical motive force, and signal of vulture voice. For after all, this shrieking thing, whatever the fine make of it may be, can but pull, or push, and do oxen's work in an impetuous manner. That proud king of Assyria, who lost his reason, and ate oxen's food,[3] would he have much more cause for pride, if he had been allowed to spend his reason in doing oxen's work?

11. These things, then, I would fain consult about, and plead with the reader for his patience in council, even while we begin with the simplest practical matters; for ravelled briars of thought entangle our feet, even at our first step. We would teach a boy to draw. Well, what shall he draw?—Gods, or men, or beasts, or clouds, or leaves, or iron cylinders? Are there any gods to be drawn? any

[1] [Collins, *Ode to Evening*; quoted also in *Queen of the Air*, § 43 (below, p. 345).]
[2] [John iii. 8, etc. For the meaning of the word "spirit," see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 23 (Vol. XVIII. p. 73), and *Queen of the Air*, § 52 (below, pp. 351–352).]
[3] [Daniel iv.]

Digitized by Google

men or women worth drawing, or only worth caricaturing? What are the æsthetic laws respecting iron cylinders; and would Titian have liked them rusty, or fresh cleaned with oil and rag, to fill the place once lightened by St. George's armour? How can we begin the smallest practical business, unless we get first some whisper of answer to such questions? We may tell a boy to draw a straight line straight, and a crooked one crooked; but what else?

And it renders the dilemma, or multilemma, more embarrassing, that whatever teaching is to be had from the founders and masters of art is quite unpractical. The first source from which we should naturally seek for guidance would, of course, be the sayings of great workmen; but a sorrowful perception presently dawns on us that the great workmen have nothing to say. They are silent, absolutely in proportion to their creative power.[1] The contributions to our practical knowledge of the principles of Art, furnished by the true captains of its hosts, may, I think, be arithmetically summed by the o of Giotto:[2] the inferior teachers become didactic in the degree of their inferiority; and those who can do nothing have always much to advise.

12. This however, observe, is only true of advice direct. You never, I grieve to say, get from the great men a plain answer to a plain question;[3] still less can you entangle them in any agreeable gossip, out of which something might unawares be picked up. But of enigmatical teaching, broken signs and sullen mutterings, of which you can understand nothing, and may make anything;—of confused discourse in the work itself, about the work, as in Dürer's "Melencolia";[4]—and of discourse not merely

[1] [As, for instance, Turner "silent as a granite crest": see Vol. VI. p. 275, and Vol. VII. p. 249.]

[2] [For the round o of Giotto, see Vol. XV. p. 39; and compare below, § 70, p. 120.]

[3] [On this subject compare *Munera Pulveris*, § 87 (Vol. XVII. p. 208), and *Queen of the Air*, § 17 (below, p. 309).]

[4] [See Vol. VII. p. 312, where the plate is given, and other references to it are noted.]

Digitized by Google

confused, but apparently unreasonable and ridiculous, about all manner of things *except* the work,—the great Egyptian and Greek artists give us much: from which, however, all that by utmost industry may be gathered, comes briefly to this,—that they have no conception of what modern men of science call the "Conservation of forces,"[1] but deduce all the force they feel in themselves, and hope for in others, from certain fountains or centres of perpetually supplied strength, to which they give various names: as, for instance, these seven following, more specially:—

1. The Spirit of Light, moral and physical, by name the "Physician-Destroyer," bearing arrows in his hand, and a lyre; pre-eminently the destroyer of human pride, and the guide of human harmony. Physically, Lord of the Sun; and a mountain Spirit, because the sun seems first to rise and set upon hills.[2]
2. The Spirit of helpful Darkness—of shade and rest. Night the Restorer.[3]
3. The Spirit of Wisdom in *Conduct*, bearing, in sign of conquest over troublous and disturbing evil, the skin of the wild goat, and the head of the slain Spirit of physical storm. In her hand, a weaver's shuttle, or a spear.[4]
4. The Spirit of Wisdom in *Arrangement;* called the

[1] [Compare Vol. XVIII. p. 341.]

[2] [For the characterisation here of Apollo, Athena, and Hephæstus, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 45, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 89 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 102, 461). For Apollo, see also *Queen of the Air*, §§ 8, 13 (below, pp. 302, 305); and for his titles, "Physician-Destroyer," *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 420 *n.*). For numerous other references to Apollo, see the General Index.]

[3] [Here Ruskin is apparently thinking of the personification of Sleep; of which there is so beautiful a representation in the winged head of Hypnos, in bronze, in the British Museum (see E. T. Cook's *Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities*, p. 433).]

[4] [Athena, or (in Egypt) Neith. For other meanings in the ægis (or goat-skin coat) of Athena, see *Queen of the Air*, § 94, p. 382; for Medusa as the spirit of storm, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 185). The sign of a shuttle is often set upon the head of Neith (see E. A. Wallis Budge: *The Gods of the Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 451).]

Digitized by Google

Lord or Father of Truth: throned on a four-square cubit, with a measuring-rod in his hand, or a potter's wheel.[1]

5. The Spirit of Wisdom in *Adaptation;* or of serviceable labour: the Master of human effort in its glow; and Lord of useful fire, moral and physical.[2]

6. The Spirit, first of young or nascent grace, and then of fulfilled beauty: the wife of the Lord of Labour.[3] I have taken the two lines in which Homer describes her girdle, for the motto of these essays: partly in memory of these outcast fancies of the great masters: and partly for the sake of a meaning which we shall find as we go on.[4]

7. The Spirit of pure human life and gladness. Master of wholesome vital passion; and physically, Lord of the Vine.[5]

13. From these ludicrous notions of motive force, inconsistent as they are with modern physiology and organic chemistry, we may, nevertheless, hereafter gather, in the details of their various expressions, something useful to us. But I grieve to say that when our provoking teachers descend from dreams about the doings of Gods to assertions respecting the deeds of Men, little beyond the blankest discouragement is to be had from them. Thus, they represent the ingenuity, and deceptive or imitative Arts of men, under the type of a Master who builds labyrinths, and makes images of living creatures, for evil purposes, or for

[1] [Here the reference is to the Egyptian Phtah; called "Lord of Truth" (*Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. pp. 226, 362); "the pedestal on which he stands is of the shape of an Egyptian cubit, metaphorically used as the hieroglyphic for truth"; he holds "the emblem of stability, commonly called the Nilometer"; and is sometimes represented with a potter's wheel (Arundale's *Gallery of Antiquities*, p. 13).]

[2] [For Hephæstus (Vulcan), see *Queen of the Air*, § 13 (below, p. 305), and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 73.]

[3] [For notes on Greek ideas of Aphrodite (Venus), see *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 185 *seq.*, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 69 *n.* (Vol. XVIII. p. 446); and for Aglaia passing into Aphrodite, *Munera Pulveris*, § 101 (Vol. XVII. p. 226).]

[4] [On this passage, see the Introduction, above, p. lxiii.]

[5] [For Dionysus (Bacchus) in these functions, see *Unto this Last*, § 63, and *Munera Pulveris*, § 102 *n.* (Vol. XVII. pp. 87, 227).]

Digitized by Google

none; and pleases himself and the people with idle jointing of toys, and filling of them with quicksilver motion; and brings his child to foolish, remediless catastrophe, in fancying his father's work as good, and strong, and fit to bear sunlight, as if it had been God's work.[1] So, again, they represent the foresight and kindly zeal of men by a most rueful figure, of one chained down to a rock by the brute force and bias and methodical hammer-stroke of the merely practical Arts, and by the merciless Necessities or Fates of present time; and so having his very heart torn piece by piece out of him by a vulturous hunger and sorrow, respecting things he cannot reach, nor prevent, nor achieve.[2] So, again, they describe the sentiment and pure soul-power of Man, as moving the very rocks and trees, and giving them life, by its sympathy with them; but losing its own best-beloved thing by mere venomous accident: and afterwards going down to hell for it, in vain; being impatient and unwise, though full of gentleness; and, in the issue, after as vainly trying to teach this gentleness to others, and to guide them out of their lower passions to sunlight of true healing Life, it drives the sensual heart of them, and the gods that govern it, into mere and pure frenzy of resolved rage, and gets torn to pieces by them, and ended; only the nightingale staying by its grave to sing.[3] All which appearing to be anything rather than helpful or encouraging instruction for beginners, we shall, for the present, I think, do well to desire these enigmatical teachers to put up their pipes and be gone; and betaking ourselves in the humblest manner to intelligible business, at least set down some definite matter for decision, to be made a first stepping-stone at the shore of this brook of despond and difficulty.

[1] [For the legend of Dædalus, as typical of "the power of mechanical as opposed to imaginative art," and for the labyrinth that he built, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 28; and for details of the legend, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 206, and the note there given. For Icarus, see also a passing reference in *Mornings in Florence*, § 126.]

[2] [For other references to Prometheus, see *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 149, 202, 206.]

[3] [For other allusions to the myths of Orpheus, see below, p. 178; "Tortoise of Ægina," § 21 (Vol. XX.); and *Mornings in Florence*, § 145.]

Digitized by Google

14. Most masters agree (and I believe they are right) that the first thing to be taught to any pupil, is how to draw an outline of such things as can be outlined.[1]

Now, there are two kinds of outline—the soft and hard. One must be executed with a soft instrument, as a piece of chalk or lead; and the other with some instrument producing for ultimate result a firm line of equal darkness; as a pen with ink, or the engraving tool on wood or metal.

And these two kinds of outline have both of them their particular objects and uses, as well as their proper scale of size in work. Thus Raphael will sketch a miniature head with his pen, but always takes chalk if he draws of the size of life. So also Holbein, and generally the other strong masters.

But the black outline seems to be peculiarly that which we ought to begin to reason upon, because it is simple and open-hearted, and does not endeavour to escape into mist. A pencil line may be obscurely and undemonstrably wrong; false in a cowardly manner, and without confession: but the ink line, if it goes wrong at all, goes wrong with a will, and may be convicted at our leisure, and put to such shame as its black complexion is capable of. May we, therefore, begin with the hard line? It will lead us far, if we can come to conclusions about it.

15. Presuming, then, that our schoolboys are such as Coleridge would have them—*i.e.*, that they are

> "Innocent, steady, and wise,
> And delight in the things of earth, water, and skies,"[2]

and, above all, in a moral state in which they may be trusted with ink—we put a pen into their hands (shall it be steel?) and a piece of smooth white paper, and something before them to draw. But what? "Nay," the reader answers, "you had surely better give them pencil first, for that may be rubbed out." Perhaps so; but I am not sure

[1] [On some change in Ruskin's views on this subject, see Vol. XV. p. xxvi.]
[2] ["Metrical Feet. Lesson for a boy"—to his son, Derwent (1807).]

Digitized by Google

that the power of rubbing out is an advantage; at all events, we shall best discover what the pencil outline ought to be, by investigating the power of the black one, and the kind of things we can draw with it.

16. Suppose, for instance, my first scholar has a turn for entomology, and asks me to draw for him a wasp's leg, or its sting; having first humanely provided me with a model by pulling one off, or out. My pen must clearly be fine at the point, and my execution none of the boldest, if I comply with his request. If I decline, and he thereupon challenges me at least to draw the wasp's body, with its pretty bands of black crinoline—behold us involved instantly in the profound question of local colour! Am I to tell him he is not to draw outlines of bands or spots? How, then, shall he know a wasp's body from a bee's? I escape, for the present, by telling him the story of Dædalus and the honeycomb;[1] set him to draw a pattern of hexagons, and lay the question of black bands up in my mind.

17. The next boy, we may suppose, is a conchologist, and asks me to draw a white snail-shell for him! Veiling my consternation at the idea of having to give a lesson on the perspective of geometrical spirals,[2] with an "austere regard of control"[3] I pass on to the next student:—Who, bringing after him, with acclamation, all the rest of the form, requires of me contemptuously, to "draw a horse."

And I retreat in final discomfiture; for not only I cannot myself execute, but I have never seen, an outline, quite simply and rightly done, either of a shell or a pony; nay, not so much as of a pony's nose. At a girls' school we might perhaps take refuge in rosebuds; but these boys, with their impatient battle-cry, "my kingdom for a horse,"[4] what is to be done for them?

18. Well, this is what I should like to be able to do

[1] [See, again, *Aratra Pentelici*, § 206 *n.*]
[2] [A lesson, however, which Ruskin gave in his *Rudimentary Series* at Oxford (see Vol. XX.).]
[3] [Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, Act ii. sc. 5, 73.]
[4] [*Richard III.*, Act v. sc. 4.]

Digitized by Google

for them. To show them an enlarged black outline, nobly done, of the two sides of a coin of Tarentum,[1] with that fiery rider kneeling, careless, on his horse's neck, and reclined on his surging dolphin, with the curled sea lapping round them; and then to convince my boys that no one (unless it were Taras's father himself, with the middle prong of his trident) could draw a horse like that, without learning;—that for poor mortals like us there must be sorrowful preparatory stages; and, having convinced them of this, set them to draw (if I had a good copy to give them) a horse's hoof, or his rib, or a vertebra of his thunder-clothed neck, or any other constructive piece of him.

19. Meanwhile, all this being far out of present reach, I am fain to shrink back into my snail-shell,[2] both for shelter and calm of peace; and ask of artists in general how the said shell, or any other simple object involving varied contour, *should* be outlined in ink?—how thick the lines should be, and how varied? My own idea of an elementary outline is that it should be unvaried; distinctly visible; not thickened towards the shaded sides of the object; not express any exaggerations of aerial perspective, nor fade at the further side of a cup as if it were the further side of a crater of a volcano; and therefore, in objects of ordinary size, show no gradation at all, unless where the real outline disappears, as in soft contours and folds. Nay, I think it may even be a question whether we ought not to resolve that the line should never gradate itself at all, but terminate quite bluntly! Albert Dürer's "Cannon"[3] furnishes a very peculiar and curious example

[1] [For another reference to "the beautiful coins of Tarentum," see *Queen of the Air*, § 39 (below, p. 338); one of the coins is reproduced on Plate XVIII., and compare "The Study of Architecture" (above, p. 22). Specimens of them may be seen in the British Museum. For the legend of Taras (son of Neptune), the mythical founder of the city, see the notes for a lecture on "The Riders of Tarentum" in Vol. XX.]

[2] [See Ruskin's drawings of shells in his Oxford Drawing School (Educational Series, Nos. 191–197).]

[3] [See below, p. 113, where the plate is given. Compare Vol. VII. p. 305, and see *Elements of Drawing*, § 98 (Vol. XV. p. 86, and Fig. 13); *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, No. 121 (Vol. XX.); and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 11.]

Digitized by Google

of this entirely equal line, even to the extreme distance; being in that respect opposed to nearly all his other work, which is wrought mostly by tapering lines; and his work in general, and Holbein's, which appear to me entirely typical of rightness in use of the graver and pen, are to be considered carefully in their relation to Rembrandt's loose etching, as in the "Spotted Shell."[1]

20. But I do not want to press my own opinions now, even when I have been able to form them distinctly. I want to get at some unanimous expression of opinion and method; and would propose, therefore, in all modesty, this question for discussion, by such artists as will favour me with answer,* giving their names:—*How ought the pen to be used to outline a form of varied contour; and ought outline to be entirely pure, or, even in its most elementary types, to pass into some suggestion of shade in the inner masses?* For there are no examples whatever of pure outlines by the great masters. They are always touched or modified by inner lines, more or less suggestive of solid form, and they are lost, or accentuated, in certain places, not so much in conformity with any explicable law, as in expression of the master's future purpose, or of what he wishes immediately to note in the character of the object. Most of them are irregular memoranda, not systematic elementary work: of those which are systematized, the greater part are carried far beyond the initiative stage; and Holbein's are nearly all washed with colour: the exact degree in which he depends upon the softening and extending his touch of ink by subsequent solution of it, being indeterminable, though exquisitely successful. His stupendous drawings in the British Museum (I can justly

* I need not say that this inquiry can only be pursued by the help of those who will take it up good-humouredly and graciously: such help I will receive in the spirit in which it is given; entering into no controversy, but questioning further where there is doubt: gathering all I can into focus, and passing silently by what seems at last irreconcilable.

[1] [See Vol. IV. p. 303.]

Digitized by Google

use no other term than "stupendous," of their consummately decisive power) furnish finer instances of this treatment than any at Basle; but it would be very difficult to reduce them to a definable law. Venetian outlines are rare, except preparations on canvas, often shaded before colouring;—while Raphael's, if not shaded, are quite loose, and useless as examples to a beginner: so that we are left wholly without guide as to the preparatory steps on which we should decisively insist; and I am myself haunted by the notion that the students were forced to shade firmly from the very beginning, in all the greatest schools; only we never can get hold of any beginnings, or any weak work of those schools: whatever is bad in them comes of decadence, not infancy.

21. I purpose in the next essay to enter upon quite another part of the inquiry, so as to leave time for the reception of communications bearing upon the present paper: and, according to their importance, I shall ask leave still to defer our return to the subject until I have had time to reflect upon them, and to collect for public service the concurrent opinions they may contain.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II[1]

[MODESTY]

22. "SIR, it cannot be better done."

We will return,[2] with the reader's permission, for a little while, to this comfortful saying of Albert Dürer's, in order to find out, if we may, what Modesty is; which it will be well for painters, readers, and especially critics, to know, before going farther. What it is; or, rather, who she is; her fingers being among the deftest in laying the ground-threads of Aglaia's Cestus.

For this same opinion of Albert's is entertained by many other people respecting their own doings—a very prevalent opinion, indeed, I find it; and the answer itself, though, as aforesaid, not made with any crushing decision,[3] is nevertheless often enough imitated, with delicacy, by artists of all countries in their various dialects. Neither can it always be held an entirely modest one, as it assuredly was in the man who would sometimes estimate a piece of his unconquerable work at only the worth of a plate of fruit, or a flask of wine—would have taken even one "fig for it," kindly offered;[4] or given it royally for nothing, to show his hand[5] to a fellow-king of his own, or any other craft—as Gainsborough gave the "Boy at the Stile" for a solo on the violin.[6] An entirely modest saying, I repeat, in

[1] [*Art Journal*, March 1865. Afterwards used in *Queen of the Air*, §§ 135–142 in that book being here §§ 22–29.]

[2] [See above, § 3, p. 52.]

[3] [*Queen of the Air* reads: "though rarely made with the Nuremberger's crushing . . ."]

[4] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 449).]

[5] [The phrase is Dürer's, used in his inscription on the drawings sent him by Raphael: see *Lectures on Art*, § 74.]

[6] ["Upon our arrival at Mr. Gainsborough's, the artist was listening to a violin. Colonel Hamilton was playing to him in so exquisite a style, that Gainsborough

Digitized by Google

Sir, It

We will

little which on this comfo

~~to this~~ so

to comm

is — w

going

three

Now: ~~for~~ the

people

~~persons~~

Opinion

~~delicately~~ ~~for~~

~~for~~ ~~of~~

is is nonthele

the ~~to~~

by signs, or in the

~~in~~, va

~~articula~~

~~manne~~

~~to~~ hesita

~~I say~~ ~~th~~

~~too~~ ~~pe~~

by whom

it assum

a piece of

his ma

a plate

over one "f

it away

to show

Gainsborough

Digitized by Google

him—not always in us. For Modesty is "the measuring virtue," the virtue of *modes* or limits. She is, indeed, said to be only the third or youngest of the children of the cardinal virtue, Temperance; and apt to be despised, being more given to arithmetic, and other vulgar studies (Cinderella-like) than her elder sisters:[1] but she is useful in the household, and arrives at great results with her yard-measure and slate-pencil—a pretty little Marchande des Modes, cutting her dress always according to the silk (if this be the proper feminine reading of "coat according to the cloth"), so that, consulting with her carefully of a morning, men get to know not only their income, but their inbeing—to know *themselves*, that is, in a gauger's manner, round, and up and down—surface and contents; what is in them, and what may be got out of them; and, in fine, their entire canon of weight and capacity.[2] That yard-measure of Modesty's, lent to those who will use it, is a curious musical reed, and will go round and round waists that are slender enough, with latent melody in every joint of it, the dark root only being soundless, moist from the wave wherein

> "Null' altra pianta che facesse fronda
> O indurasse, puote aver vita."*

But when the little sister herself takes it in hand, to measure things outside of us with, the joints shoot out in an amazing manner: the four-square walls even of celestial

* *Purgatorio*, i. 103.[3]

exclaimed, 'Now, my dear Colonel, if you will but go on, I will give you that picture of the boy at the stile, which you have so often wished to purchase of me.' As Gainsborough's versatile fancy was at this time devoted to music, his attention was so riveted to the tones of the violin, that for nearly half-an-hour he was motionless; after which, the Colonel requested that a hackney-coach might be sent for, wherein he carried off the picture" (*Nollekens and his Times*, by J. T. Smith, 1828, vol. i. p. 184). The incident is also mentioned in Fulcher's *Life of Gainsborough*, 1856, p. 149.]

[1] [The MS. reads: ". . . than her two sisters, Continentia and Clementia, who are given to talking about themselves; but she is highly useful . . ." For the systems of the virtues in various writers, see Vol. X. pp. 371 *seq.*]

[2] [For modesty as giving a man a just estimate of his capacity, see Vol. XVI. p. 156 *n.*]

[3] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 290–291), where Ruskin translates the passage.]

Digitized by Google

cities being measurable enough by that reed;[1] and the way pointed to them, though only to be followed, or even seen, in the dim starlight shed down from worlds amidst which there is no name of Measure any more, though the reality of it always. For, indeed, to all true modesty the necessary business is not inlook, but outlook, and especially *up*look: it is only her sister, Shamefacedness, who is known by the drooping lashes—Modesty, quite otherwise, by her large eyes full of wonder; for she never contemns herself, nor is ashamed of herself, but forgets herself—at least until she has done something worth memory. It is easy to peep and potter about one's own deficiencies in a quiet immodest discontent; but Modesty is so pleased with other people's doings, that she has no leisure to lament her own: and thus, knowing the fresh feeling of contentment, unstained with thought of self, she does not fear being pleased, when there is cause, with her own rightness, as with another's, saying calmly, "Be it mine, or yours, or whose else's it may, it is no matter;—this also is well." But the right to say such a thing depends on continual reverence, and manifold sense of failure. If you have known yourself to have failed, you may trust, when it comes, the strange consciousness of success; if you have faithfully loved the noble work of others, you need not fear to speak with respect of things duly done, of your own.

23. But the principal good that comes of art's being followed in this reverent feeling is vitally manifest in the associative conditions of it. Men who know their place can take it and keep it, be it low or high, contentedly and firmly, neither yielding nor grasping; and the harmony of hand and thought follows, rendering all great deeds of art possible—deeds in which the souls of men meet like the jewels in the windows of Aladdin's palace,[2] the little gems and the large all equally pure, needing no cement but the fitting of facets; while the associative work of immodest men is all jointless, and astir with wormy ambition; putridly

[1] [See Revelation xxi. 15.]
[2] [See Vol. IX. pp. 307, 455.]

Digitized by Google

dissolute, and for ever on the crawl: so that if it come together for a time, it can only be by metamorphosis through flash of volcanic fire out of the vale of Siddim,[1] vitrifying the clay of it, and fastening the slime, only to end in wilder scattering; according to the fate of those oldest, mightiest, immodestest of builders, of whom it is told in scorn, "They had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar."

24. The first function of Modesty, then, being this recognition of place, her second is the recognition of law, and delight in it, for the sake of law itself, whether her part be to assert it, or obey. For as it belongs to all immodesty to defy or deny law, and assert privilege and licence according to its own pleasure (it being therefore rightly called "in*solent*," that is, "custom-breaking," violating some usual and appointed order to attain for itself greater forwardness or power), so it is the habit of all modesty to love the constancy and "*solem*nity,"[2] or, literally, "accustomedness," of law, seeking first what are the solemn, appointed, inviolable customs and general orders of nature, and of the Master of nature, touching the matter in hand; and striving to put itself, as habitually and inviolably, in compliance with them. Out of which habit,[3] once established, arises what is rightly called "conscience," not "science" merely, but "with-science," a science "with

[1] [Genesis xiv.; and xi. 3.]

[2] [On the derivation of this word, see *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871, § 8 (Vol. XVIII. p. 37 *n.*).]

[3] [The MS. reads:—

"Out of which habit, once established, there comes what is rightly called the Law in the heart, or 'Conscience,' not 'Science' merely, but 'With, or Con-science,' a science with us, and with all creation too, which only modest creatures can have, all the members of it, little or mighty, witnessing together with us in their work and their happy *συνείδησις ὅτι καλόν*—'consciousness that it is good': the bee being also profoundly of that opinion, assenting with her low murmur in its ancient unison; and the [lark] who—

"'blest above all kinds—supremely skilled
Restless with fixed to balance, high with low,
May leave the halcyon free her hopes to build
On such forbearance as the deep may show;'

and the swallow, in the chattering but modestly upside-down Babel of hers, under the roof, with its unvolcanic slime for mortar; and the two ants who

Digitized by Google

us," such as only modest creatures can have—with or within them—and within all creation besides, every member of it, strong or weak, witnessing together, and joining in the happy consciousness that each one's work is good: the bee also being profoundly of that opinion; and the lark; and the swallow, in that noisy, but modestly upside-down Babel of hers, under the eaves, with its unvolcanic slime for mortar; and the two ants who are asking of each other at the turn of that little ant's-foot-worn path through the moss, "lor via e lor fortuna";[1] and the builders also, who built yonder pile of cloud-marble in the west, and the gilder who gilded it, and is gone down behind it.

25. But I think we shall better understand what we ought of the nature of Modesty, and of her opposite, by taking a simple instance of both, in the practice of that art of music which the wisest have agreed in thinking the first element of education;[2] only I must ask the reader's patience with me through a parenthesis.

Among the foremost men whose power has had to assert itself, though with conquest, yet with countless loss, through peculiarly English disadvantages of circumstance, of which I spoke in the prefatory chapter,[3] are assuredly to be ranked together, both for honour and for mourning, Thomas Bewick and George Cruikshank.[4] There is,

are inquiring of each other on that little path of theirs through the moss, 'lor via e lor fortuna'; and the builders also who built yonder pile of cloud-marble in the west, and the Gilder who gilded it, and is gone."

For the Greek phrase, see above, p. 53. The lines on the lark are adapted from Wordsworth's *A Morning Exercise* ("Hail, blest above all kinds . . . Thou leav'st . . ."). For the Gilder, the Sun who rejoiceth to run his course, see Psalms xix. 5. For the bees, compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 51, where Ruskin cites Shakespeare's description of "the singing masons building roofs of gold."]

[1] [*Purgatorio*, xxvi. 36:—

"E'en so the emmets, 'mid their dusky troops,
Peer closely one at other, to spy out
Their mutual road perchance, and how they thrive."]

[2] [See above, § 8, p. 60. And for Plato on music, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 102 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 227), and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 73, 82, and 83.]

[3] [See above, pp. 54–57.]

[4] [The MS. has: "the rustic faithfulness of Bewick and—I will undertake fully to justify these following words, if the reader starts at them—the grave and terrible earnestness of George Cruikshank."]

Digitized by Google

however, less cause for regret in the instance of Bewick.[1] We may understand that it was well for us, once, to see what an entirely powerful painter's genius, and an entirely keen and true man's temper, could achieve together, unhelped, but also unharmed, among the black banks and wolds of Tyne. But the genius of Cruikshank has been cast away in an utterly ghastly and lamentable manner: his superb line-work, worthy of any class of subject, and his powers of conception and composition, of which I cannot venture to estimate the range in their degraded application, having been condemned, by his fate, to be spent either in rude jesting, or in vain war with conditions of vice too low alike for record or rebuke, among the dregs of the British populace.[2] Yet perhaps I am wrong in regretting even this: it may be an appointed lesson for futurity, that the art of the best English etcher in the nineteenth century, spent on illustrations of the lives of burglars and drunkards, should one day be seen in museums beneath Greek vases fretted with drawings of the wars of Troy, or side by side with Dürer's "Knight and Death."[3]

26. Be that as it may, I am at present glad to be able to refer to one of these perpetuations, by his strong hand, of such human character as our faultless British constitution occasionally produces, in out-of-the-way corners. It is

[1] [For earlier references to Bewick, see Vol. XIII. p. 435; Vol. XIV. pp. 361, 392, 401–402, 494; and Vol. XV. pp. 223, 374, 410. For later comments on his life and work, see *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 200, 226, 227. See also below, p. 155.]

[2] [Ruskin refers to the turning-point in the life and work of Cruikshank (1792–1878), when at the age of fifty-six he published his eight plates of "The Bottle," and in the following year the eight of "The Drunkard's Children." Henceforth "he devoted himself with all the energy of his nature to the duty of advocating by his pencil and his practice the cause of total abstinence," following up his plates with a huge cartoon in 1862 of "The Worship of Bacchus." (Compare below, p. 199, *n.* 2.) The artist's new departure inspired a sonnet by Matthew Arnold ("Artist, whose hand, with horror wing'd"). Ruskin, who was a very great admirer of Cruikshank's earlier work (see, *e.g.*, the Preface to "German Popular Stories," below, p. 238), deplores elsewhere also the artist's self-devotion to social propagandism: see *Time and Tide*, § 63 (Vol. XVII. p. 370). For other and earlier references to Cruikshank, see Vol. II. p. xxxiii.; Vol. V. p. xxiii.; Vol. VI. p. 471; Vol. VII. p. 350; Vol. XIII. p. 504; Vol. XIV. p. 361; Vol. XV. pp. 204, 222–223; Vol. XVI. pp. xx., 437. For Ruskin's personal interest in the artist and kindness to him, see Vol. XVIII. p. xlix.]

[3] [See Plate D in Vol. VII. p. 310.]

Digitized by Google

among his illustrations of the Irish Rebellion,[1] and represents the pillage and destruction of a gentleman's house by the mob. They have made a heap in the drawing-room of the furniture and books, to set first fire to; and are tearing up the floor for its more easily kindled planks: the less busily-disposed meanwhile hacking round in rage, with axes, and smashing what they can with butt-ends of guns. I do not care to follow with words the ghastly truth of the picture into its detail; but the most expressive incident of the whole, and the one immediately to my purpose, is this, that one fellow has sat himself at the piano, on which, hitting down fiercely with his clenched fists, he plays, grinning, such tune as may be so producible, to which melody two of his companions, flourishing knotted sticks, dance, after their manner, on the top of the instrument.

27. I think we have in this conception as perfect an instance as we require of the lowest supposable phase of immodest or licentious art in music; the "inner consciousness of good"[2] being dim, even in the musician and his audience; and wholly unsympathized with, and unacknowledged, by the Delphian, Vestal, and all other prophetic and cosmic powers. This represented scene came into my mind suddenly, one evening a few weeks ago, in contrast with another which I was watching in its reality;[3] namely, a group of gentle school-girls, leaning over Mr. Charles Hallé as he was playing a variation on "Home, sweet Home." They had sustained with unwonted courage the glance of subdued indignation with which, having just closed a rippling melody of Sebastian Bach's, (much like what one might fancy the singing of nightingales would be if they fed on honey instead of flies,) he turned to the slight, popular air. But they had their own associations with it,

[1] [*History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798; with Memoirs of the Union, and Emmett's Insurrection in 1803.* By W. H. Maxwell. Sixth Edition. With numerous Illustrations drawn and engraved by George Cruikshank, 1864. The illustration described above is at p. 384, entitled "Rebels destroying a house and furniture."]

[2] [For *συνείδησις ὅτι καλόν*, see above, p. 53.]

[3] [At Winnington in 1863; see the letter, describing the scene, in Vol. XVIII. p. lxx.]

Digitized by Google

and besought for, and obtained it; and pressed close, at first, in vain, to see what no glance could follow, the traversing of the fingers. They soon thought no more of seeing. The wet eyes, round-open, and the little scarlet upper lips, lifted, and drawn slightly together, in passionate glow of utter wonder, became picture-like,—porcelain-like,—in motionless joy, as the sweet multitude of low notes fell in their timely infinities, like summer rain. Only La Robbia himself (nor even he, unless with tenderer use of colour than is usual in his work) could have rendered some image of that listening.[1]

28. But if the reader can give due vitality in his fancy to these two scenes, he will have in them representative types, clear enough for all future purpose, of the several agencies of debased and perfect art. And the interval may easily and continuously be filled by mediate gradations. Between the entirely immodest, unmeasured, and (in evil sense) unmannered, execution with the fist; and the entirely modest, measured, and (in the noblest sense) mannered, or moral'd execution with the finger;—between the impatient and unpractised doing, containing in itself the witness of lasting impatience and idleness through all previous life, and the patient and practised doing, containing in itself the witness of self-restraint and unwearied toil through all previous life;—between the expressed subject and sentiment of home violation, and the expressed subject[2] and sentiment of home love;—between the sympathy of audience given in irreverent and contemptuous rage, joyless as the rabidness of a dog, and the sympathy of audience given in an almost appalled humility of intense, rapturous, and yet entirely reasoning and reasonable pleasure;—between these two limits of octave, the reader will find he can class, according to its modesty, usefulness, and grace, or becomingness, all other musical art. For although purity

[1] [Ruskin is thinking no doubt of such work as Luca della Robbia's friezes of children for the Cantorie (now in the Opera del Duomo) at Florence. For criticisms on his colour, see Vol. IV. pp. 300–301 *n.*]

[2] [The words "and sentiment of home violation, and the expressed subject" (which appear in the *Art Journal* and in the first edition of *Queen of the Air*) were, to the loss of the sense of the passage, accidentally omitted in all later editions of that book.]

Digitized by Google

of purpose and fineness of execution by no means go together, degree to degree, (since fine, and indeed all but the finest, work is often spent in the most wanton purpose—as in all our modern opera—and the rudest execution is again often joined with purest purpose, as in a mother's song to her child,) still the entire accomplishment of music is only in the union of both. For the difference between that "all but" finest and "finest" is an infinite one; and besides this, however the power of the performer, once attained, may be afterwards misdirected, in slavery to popular passion or childishness, and spend itself, at its sweetest, in idle melodies, cold and ephemeral (like Michael Angelo's snow statue in the other art,[1]) or else in vicious difficulty and miserable noise—crackling of thorns under the pot[2] of public sensuality—still, the attainment of this power, and the maintenance of it, involve always in the executant some virtue or courage of high kind; the understanding of which, and of the difference between the discipline which develops it and the disorderly efforts of the amateur, it will be one of our first businesses to estimate rightly. And though not indeed by degree to degree, yet in essential relation (as of winds to waves, the one being always the true cause of the other, though they are not necessarily of equal force at the same time), we shall find vice in its varieties, with art-failure,—and virtue in its varieties, with art-success,—fall and rise together: the peasant-girl's song at her spinning-wheel, the peasant-labourer's "to the oaks and rills,"[3]—domestic music, feebly yet sensitively skilful,—music for the multitude, of beneficent, or of traitorous power,—dance-melodies, pure and orderly, or foul and frantic,—march-music, blatant in mere fever of animal pugnacity, or majestic with force of national duty and memory,—song music, reckless, sensual, sickly, slovenly, forgetful even of the foolish words it effaces with foolish noise,—or thoughtful, sacred, healthful, artful, for ever sanctifying noble thought

[1] [See *A Joy for Ever*, § 36 (Vol. XVI. p. 39).]
[2] [Ecclesiastes vii. 6.]
[3] [Milton: *Lycidas*, 186.]

Digitized by Google

with separately distinguished loveliness of belonging sound, —all these families and gradations of good or evil, however mingled, follow, in so far as they are good, one constant law of virtue (or "life-strength," which is the literal meaning of the word,[1] and its intended one, in wise men's mouths), and in so far as they are evil, are evil by outlawry and unvirtue, or death-weakness. Then, passing wholly beyond the domain of death, we may still imagine the ascendant nobleness of the art, through all the concordant life of incorrupt creatures, and a continually deeper harmony of "*puissant* words and murmurs made to bless,"[2] until we reach

> "The undisturbèd song of pure concent,
> Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne."[3]

29. And so far as the sister arts can be conceived to have place or office, their virtues are subject to a law absolutely the same as that of music, only extending its authority into more various conditions, owing to the introduction of a distinctly representative and historical power, which acts under logical as well as mathematical restrictions, and is capable of endlessly changeful fault, fallacy and defeat, as well as of endlessly manifold victory.[4] To the discernment of this law we will now address ourselves slowly, beginning with the consideration of little things and of easily definable virtues. And since Patience is the pioneer of all the others, I shall endeavour in the next paper to show how that modest virtue has been either held of no account, or else set to vilest work in our modern Art-schools; and what harm has resulted from such disdain, or such employment of her.

[1] [See *Ethics of the Dust*, § 80 (Vol. XVIII. p. 301).]
[2] [Milton: *Arcades*, 60.]
[3] [Milton: *At a Solemn Music*. With what Ruskin says here about the ethical qualities of music, compare the Rede Lecture, below, pp. 175–180.]
[4] [At this point the reprint of this passage in *Queen of the Air* (below, p. 409) ended.]

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III[1]

[PATIENCE]

"Dame Paciencë sitting there I fonde,
With facë pale, upon an hill of sonde."[2]

30. As I try to summon this vision of Chaucer's into definiteness, and as it fades before me, and reappears, like the image of Piccarda in the moon,[3] there mingles with it another;—the image of an Italian child, lying, she also, upon a hill of sand, by Eridanus' side; a vision which has never quite left me since I saw it. A girl of ten or twelve, it might be; one of the children to whom there has never been any other lesson taught than that of patience:—patience of famine and thirst; patience of heat and cold; patience of fierce word and sullen blow; patience of changeless fate and giftless time. She was lying with her arms thrown back over her head, all languid and lax, on an earth-heap by the river side (the softness of the dust being the only softness she had ever known), in the southern suburb of Turin, one golden afternoon in August, years ago.[4] She had been at play, after her fashion, with other patient children, and had thrown herself down to rest, full in the sun, like a lizard. The sand was mixed with the draggled locks of her black hair, and some of it sprinkled over her face and body, in an "ashes to ashes" kind of way; a few black

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 101, 102, April 1865. A small portion of this chapter was read by Ruskin, at Oxford, in November 1884, as a by-lecture, during the delivery of the course on "The Pleasures of England": the lecture on Patience was reported in E. T. Cook's *Studies in Ruskin*, pp. 264–271; and see a later volume of this edition.]

[2] [Chaucer: *The Assembly of Foules*, stanza 35; quoted also in *Ethics of the Dust*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 247).]

[3] [*Paradiso*, iii. 7 *seq.*]

[4] [August 1858.]

Digitized by Google

rags about her loins, but her limbs nearly bare, and her little breasts, scarce dimpled yet,—white,—marble-like—but, as wasted marble, thin with the scorching and the rains of Time. So she lay, motionless; black and white by the shore in the sun; the yellow light flickering back upon her from the passing eddies of the river, and burning down on her from the west. So she lay, like a dead Niobid: it seemed as if the Sun-God, as he sank towards grey Viso (who stood pale in the south-west, and pyramidal as a tomb), had been wroth with Italy for numbering her children too carefully, and slain this little one. Black and white she lay, all breathless, in a sufficiently pictorial manner: the gardens of the Villa Regina gleamed beyond, graceful with laurel-grove and labyrinthine terrace;[1] and folds of purple mountain were drawn afar, for curtains round her little dusty bed.

31. Pictorial enough, I repeat; and yet I might not now have remembered her, so as to find her figure mingling, against my will, with other images, but for her manner of "revival." For one of her playmates coming near, cast some word at her which angered her; and she rose—"en ego, victa situ"[2]—she rose with a single spring, like a snake; one hardly saw the motion; and with a shriek so shrill that I put my hands upon my ears; and so uttered herself, indignant and vengeful, with words of justice,—Alecto standing by, satisfied, teaching her acute, articulate syllables, and adding her own voice to carry them thrilling through the blue laurel shadows. And having spoken, she went her way, wearily: and I passed by on the other side,[3] meditating, with such Levitical propriety as a respectable person should, on the asp-like Passion, following the sorrowful Patience; and on the way in which the saying, "Dust

[1] [For Ruskin's description of these gardens, see Vol. XVI. pp. 192-193.]

[2] [Virgil: *Æneid*, vii. 452—from the scene between the Fury Alecto and Turnus. She had appeared to the prince first in the guise of an old woman, and he had mocked at her as a mouldering eld. Whereupon she darts up and shows herself in her true guise: "Lo, I am she, worn out with mould," etc.]

[3] [Luke x. 31.]

Digitized by Google

shalt thou eat all thy days"[1] has been confusedly fulfilled, first by much provision of human dust for the meat of what Keats calls "human serpentry";[2] and last, by gathering the Consumed and Consumer into dust together, for the meat of the death spirit, or serpent Apap.[3] Neither could I, for long, get rid of the thought of this strange dust-manufacture under the mill-stones, as it were, of Death; and of the two colours of the grain, discriminate beneath, though indiscriminately cast into the hopper. For indeed some of it seems only to be made whiter for its patience, and becomes kneadable into spiced bread, where they sell in Babylonian shops "slaves, and souls of men";[4] but other some runs dark from under the mill-stones; a little sulphurous and nitrous foam being mingled in the conception of it; and is ominously stored up in magazines near river-embankments; patient enough—for the present.[5]

82. But it is provoking to me that the image of this child mingles itself now with Chaucer's; for I should like truly to know what Chaucer means by his sand-hill. Not but that this is just one of those enigmatical pieces of teaching which we have made up our minds not to be troubled with,[6] since it may evidently mean just what we like. Sometimes I would fain have it to mean the ghostly sand of the horologe of the world: and I think that the pale figure is seated on the recording heap, which rises slowly, and ebbs in giddiness, and flows again, and rises, tottering; and still she sees, falling beside her, the never-ending stream of phantom sand. Sometimes I like to think

[1] [Genesis iii. 14.]
[2] [*Endymion*, i. 821.]
[3] [See *Queen of the Air*, § 72; below, p. 366.]
[4] [Revelation xviii. 3, 11, 13 (the chapter describing the fall of Babylon): "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. . . . And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more. . . . And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments . . . and slaves, and souls of men."]
[5] [The reference is to the Penitentiary then standing at Millbank (see below, p. 227).]
[6] [See above, § 12, p. 63.]

Digitized by Google

that she is seated on the sand because she is herself the Spirit of Staying, and victor over all things that pass and change;—quicksand of the desert in moving pillar; quicksand of the sea in moving floor; roofless all, and unabiding, but she abiding;—to herself, her home. And sometimes I think, though I do not like to think (neither did Chaucer mean this, for he always meant the lovely thing first, not the low one), that she is seated on her sand-heap as the only treasure to be gained by human toil;[1] and that the little ant-hill, where the best of us creep to and fro, bears to angelic eyes, in the patientest gathering of its galleries, only the aspect of a little heap of dust; while for the worst of us, the heap, still lower by the levelling of those winged surveyors, is high enough, nevertheless, to overhang, and at last to close in judgment, on the seventh day, over the journeyers to the fortunate Islands; while to their dying eyes, through the mirage, "the city sparkles like a grain of salt."[2]

33. But of course it does not in the least matter what it means. All that matters specially to us in Chaucer's vision, is that, next to Patience (as the reader will find by looking at the context in the *Assembly of Foules*), were "Beheste" and "Art";—Promise, that is, and Art: and that, although these visionary powers are here waiting only in one of the outer courts of Love, and the intended patience is here only the long-suffering of love; and the intended beheste, its promise; and the intended art, its cunning,—the same powers companion each other necessarily in the courts and ante-chambers of every triumphal home of man. I say triumphal home, for, indeed, triumphal *arches* which you pass under, are but foolish things, and may be nailed together any day, out of pasteboard and filched laurel; but triumphal *doors*, which you can enter in at, with living laurel crowning the Lares, are not

[1] [Compare the title *Munera Pulveris:* see Vol. XVII. p. lxvi.]
[2] [Tennyson: the last line of "Will." For Ruskin's admiration of the line, see Vol. II. p. xxviii. *n.*]

Digitized by Google

so easy of access: and outside of them waits always this sad portress, Patience; that is to say, the submission to the eternal laws of Pain and Time, and acceptance of them as inevitable, smiling at the grief.[1] So much pains you shall take—so much time you shall wait: that is the Law. Understand it, honour it; with peace of heart accept the pain, and attend the hours; and as the husbandman in his waiting, you shall see, first the blade, and then the ear, and then the laughing of the valleys.[2] But refuse the Law, and seek to do your work in your own time, or by any serpentine way to evade the pain, and you shall have no harvest—nothing but apples of Sodom:[3] dust shall be your meat, and dust in your throat—there is no singing in such harvest time.

84. And this is true for all things, little and great. There is a time and a way in which they can be done: none shorter—none smoother. For all noble things, the time is long and the way rude. You may fret and fume as you will; for every start and struggle of impatience there shall be so much attendant failure; if impatience become a habit, nothing but failure: until on the path you have chosen for your better swiftness, rather than the honest flinty one, there shall follow you, fast at hand, instead of Beheste and Art for companions, those two wicked hags,

> "With hoary locks all loose, and visage grim;
> Their feet unshod, their bodies wrapt in rags,
> And both as swift on foot as chased stags;
> And yet the one her other legge had lame,
> Which with a staff all full of little snags
> She did support, and Impotence her name:
> But th' other was Impatience, armed with raging flame."[4]

---

[1] [*Twelfth Night*, ii. 4, line 116:—

> "like Patience on a monument,
> Smiling at grief"—

quoted also in *Ethics of the Dust*, § 36 (Vol. XVIII. p. 247), and earlier, in Vol. I. p. 434. It is interesting to see how the young man there quotes it, laughing at the image, and how differently he used the passage in later years.]

[2] [Mark iv. 28; Psalms lxv. 14 (Prayer-book Version).]

[3] [Compare *Unto this Last*, § 81 (Vol. XVII. p. 110).]

[4] [Spenser: *Faerie Queene*, ii. 11, 23. Compare Vol. X. p. 391.]

Digitized by Google

"*Raging* flame," note; unserviceable;—flame of the black grain.[1] But the fire which Patience carries in her hand is that truly stolen from Heaven,[2] in the *pith* of the rod—fire of the slow match; persistent Fire like it also in her own body,—fire in the marrow; unquenchable incense of life: though it may seem to the bystanders that there is no breath in her, and she holds herself like a statue, as Hermione, "the statue lady," or Griselda, "the stone lady";[3] unless indeed one looks close for the glance *forward*, in the eyes, which distinguishes such pillars from the pillars, not of flesh, but of salt, whose eyes are set backwards.[4]

35. I cannot get to my work in this paper, somehow; the web of these old enigmas entangles me again and again.[5]

[1] [See above, § 31, for the dark grain of crime.]

[2] [The reference is to the fire which Prometheus stole from Heaven at the end of a rod.]

[3] [For Hermione, "pillar-like," see *Munera Pulveris*, § 134 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 257); for Griselda, see next page.]

[4] [Genesis xix. 26.]

[5] [This section (§ 35) is a particularly characteristic example of the allusive, and somewhat esoteric, style in which much of *The Cestus of Aglaia* is written; see the author's description of this style, in which "all that comes into my head is said for my own pleasure" (*Queen of the Air*, § 134; below, p. 408). *Gris*elda brings into his head memories of the Tosa (or Toccia) falls beneath the Gries glacier (he may have visited the falls from Domo d'Ossola in 1845); then he passes to think of the long oppression of Raetia under petty tyrants (of which a record remains in the many ruined feudal castles which stud that part of Switzerland). Their rule was at last shaken off by the formation of the Grison Confederation, in which one of the constituents was the Grey League (Graue Bund): hence the name of the present canton, Graubünden (*Fr.* Grisons). The name (though possibly referring to the several counts, Grafen, whom the League comprised) is popularly derived from the grey home-spun coats of those by whom it was formed: see the passage quoted by Ruskin in Vol. XIII. p. 516. The thought of the Grison country brings to his mind its central defile, the Via Mala, the grandeur of which had impressed him so many years ago (see *Præterita*, i. § 136; ii. § 131), and he doubts incidentally whether the men of Graubünden have hewn their way in the world so decisively as the foaming river. Then the colour of Grison Grey recalls to him at one moment Tennyson's Enid ("Earl, entreat her by my love, Albeit I give no reason but my wish, That she ride with me in her faded silk"—*The Marriage of Geraint*); and, at the next, Turner's brilliant water-colour sketches on grey paper (see Vol. XIII. p. 385), which allusion, lastly, leads him to a lament at the little interest taken in the sketches (see below, § 104 *n.*, p. 148), then shown at the South Kensington Museum (see Vol. XIII. p. xxxvi.).

Then in the next section Ruskin carries a little further his allusion to Tennyson:—

> "And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
> Geraint had longing in him evermore
> To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
> That crost the trencher as she laid it down."

He compares the arts to princesses thus set to menial service, and so gets "disentangled," and returns to his main subject.]

Digitized by Google

That rough syllable which begins the name of Griselda, "Gries," "the stone"; the roar of the long fall of the Toccia seems to mix with the sound of it, bringing thoughts of the great Alpine patience; mute snow wreathed by grey rock, till avalanche time comes—patience of mute tormented races till the time of the Grey league came; at last impatient. (Not that, hitherto, it has hewn its way to much: the Rhine-foam of the Via Mala seeming to have done its work better.) But it is a noble colour that Grison Grey; —dawn colour—graceful for a faded silk to ride in, and wonderful, in paper, for getting a glow upon, if you begin wisely, as you may some day perhaps see by those Turner sketches at Kensington, if ever anybody can see them.

86. But we *will* get to work now; the work being to understand, if we may, what tender creatures are indeed riding with us, the British public, in faded silk, and handing our plates for us with tender little thumbs,[1] and never wearing, or doing, anything else (not always having much to put on their own plates). The loveliest arts, the arts of noblest descent, have been long doing this for us, and are still, and we have no idea of their being Princesses, but keep them ill-entreated and enslaved: vociferous as we are against Black slavery, while we are gladly acceptant of Grey; and fain to keep Aglaia and her sisters—Urania and hers,—serving us in faded silk, and taken for kitchen-wenches. We are mad Sanchos, not mad Quixotes: our eyes enchant *Down*wards.

87. For one instance only: has the reader ever reflected on the patience, and deliberate subtlety, and unostentatious will, involved in the ordinary process of steel engraving; that process of which engravers themselves now with doleful voices deplore the decline, and with sorrowful hearts expect the extinction, after their own days?

By the way—my friends of the field of steel,—you need fear nothing of the kind. What there is of mechanical in your work; of habitual and thoughtless, of vulgar or servile

[1] [Quoted also in Vol. XVII. p. 523.]

Digitized by Google

—for that, indeed, the time has come; the sun will burn it up for you, very ruthlessly; but what there is of human liberty, and of sanguine life, in finger and fancy, is kindred of the sun, and quite inextinguishable by him. He is the very last of divinities who would wish to extinguish it. With his red right hand, though full of lightning coruscation, he will faithfully and tenderly clasp yours, warm blooded; you will see the vermilion in the flesh-shadows all the clearer; but your hand will not be withered. I tell you—(dogmatically, if you like to call it so, knowing it well[1])—a square inch of man's engraving is worth all the photographs that ever were dipped in acid (or left half-washed afterwards, which is saying much[2])—only it must be man's engraving; not machine's engraving. You have founded a school on patience and labour — only. That school must soon be extinct. You will have to found one on thought, which is Phœnician in immortality and fears no fire. Believe me, photography can do against line engraving just what Madame Tussaud's wax-work can do against sculpture. That, and no more.[3] You are too timid in this matter; you are like Isaac in that picture of Mr. Schnorr's in the last number of this Journal, and with Teutonically metaphysical precaution, shade your eyes from the sun with your back to it.[4] Take courage; turn your eyes to it in an aquiline manner; put more sunshine on your steel, and less burr; and leave the photographers to their Phœbus of Magnesium wire.[5]

[1] [See above, § 9, p. 60. So in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 6, Ruskin claims that his so-called "arrogance" only consists in saying plainly what he has ascertained certainly.]

[2] [Photographers will note in this allusion to imperfect washing the touch of practical acquaintance with the pursuit; as was the case. For Ruskin's early interest in photography, see Vol. III. p. 210.]

[3] [For Ruskin's views on the uses and limitations of photography, and its relation to engraving, see the passages noted at Vol. III. pp. 169, 210 *n.*; and compare Vol. XIV. pp. 358–359; Vol. XV. p. 353; Vol. VII. pp. 4, 13; Vol. IX. p. xlix.]

[4] [The *Art Journal* for March contained a notice of "German Painters of the Modern School: Schadow, Vert, and Schnorr." On p. 71 was an engraving of "The Meeting of Rebecca and Isaac" by Schnorr; Isaac is seen shading his eyes from the sun, which is setting *behind* him. Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, 1764–1841.]

[5] [For another reference to magnesium light, at this time beginning to attract attention, see *Sesame and Lilies* (Vol. XVIII. p. 106 *n.*).]

Digitized by Google

38. Not that I mean to speak disrespectfully of magnesium. I honour it to its utmost fiery particle[1] (though I think the soul a fierier one); and I wish the said magnesium all comfort and triumph; nightly-lodging in lighthouses, and utter victory over coal gas. Could Titian but have known what the gnomes who built his dolomite crags above Cadore had mixed in the make of them,—and that one day—one night, I mean—his blue distances would still be seen pure blue, by light got out of his own mountains!

Light out of limestone—colour out of coal—and white wings out of hot water![2] It is a great age this of ours, for traction and extraction, if it only knew what to extract from itself, or where to drag itself to!

39. But in the meantime I want the public to admire this patience of yours, while they have it, and to understand what it has cost to give them even this, which has to pass away. We will not take instance in figure engraving, of which the complex skill and textural gradation by dot and chequer must be wholly incomprehensible to amateurs; but we will take a piece of average landscape engraving, such as is sent out of any good workshop—the master who puts his name at the bottom of the plate being of course responsible only for the general method, for the sufficient skill of subordinate hands, and for the few finishing touches if necessary. We will take, for example, the plate of Turner's "Mercury and Argus," engraved in this Journal.[3]

40. I suppose most people, looking at such a plate, fancy it is produced by some simple mechanical artifice, which is to drawing only what printing is to writing. They conclude, at all events,[4] that there is something

[1] [Byron: *Don Juan*, xi. 59: "the mind, that very fiery particle."]

[2] [The use of aniline dyes (produced from the distillation of coal tar) was comparatively new when Ruskin wrote, the first patent having been taken out in 1858. The next reference appears to be to the substitution of steam navigation for the white wings of sails.]

[3] [At p. 16 of vol. iv. (1865). Engraved by J. T. Willmore. A photogravure of the picture is Plate 14 in Vol. III. of this edition.]

[4] [The rest of this and the whole of the succeeding paragraph were reprinted in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 115 (beginning "You cannot really think that there is something . . ."), and the first paragraph of § 116.]

Digitized by Google

complacent, sympathetic, and helpful in the nature of steel; so that while a pen-and-ink sketch may always be considered an achievement proving cleverness in the sketcher, a sketch on steel comes out by mere favour of the indulgent metal: or that the plate is woven like a piece of pattern silk, and the pattern is developed by pasteboard cards punched full of holes. Not so. Look close at[1] that engraving—imagine it to be a drawing in pen and ink, and yourself required similarly to produce its parallel! True, the steel point has the one advantage of not blotting, but it has tenfold or twentyfold disadvantage, in that you cannot slur, nor efface, except in a very resolute and laborious way, nor play with it, nor even see what you are doing with it at the moment, far less the effect that is to be. You must *feel* what you are doing with it, and know precisely what you have got to do; how deep—how broad—how far apart—your lines must be, etc. and etc. (a couple of lines of etc.'s would not be enough to imply all you must know). But suppose the plate *were* only a pen drawing: take your pen—your finest—and just try to copy the leaves that entangle the nearest cow's head and the head itself; remembering always that the kind of work required here is mere child's play compared to that of fine figure engraving. Nevertheless, take a strong magnifying glass to this—count the dots and lines that gradate the nostrils and the edges of the facial bone; notice how the light is left on the top of the head by the stopping at its outline of the coarse touches which form the shadows under the leaves; examine it well, and then—I humbly ask of you—try to do a piece of it yourself! You clever sketcher—you young lady or gentleman of genius—you eye-glassed dilettante—you current writer of criticism royally plural,—I beseech you—do it yourself; do the merely etched outline yourself, if no more. Look you,—you hold your etching

[1] [In *Ariadne Florentina*, § 115, this passage reads: "Look close at this engraving"—*i.e.*, Miller's engraving of Turner's "Grand Canal"—"or take a simpler one, Turner's 'Mercury and Argus,'—and imagine . . ."]

Digitized by Google

needle this way, as you would a pencil, nearly; and then, —you scratch with it! it is as easy as lying.[1] Or if you think that too difficult, take an easier piece;—take either of the light sprays of foliage that rise against the fortress on the right, put your glass over them—look how their fine outline is first drawn, leaf by leaf; then how the distant rock is put in between, with broken lines, mostly stopping before they touch the leaf outline, and—again, I pray you, do it yourself; if not on that scale, on a larger. Go on into the hollows of the distant rock—traverse its thickets—number its towers[2]—count how many lines there are in a laurel bush—in an arch—in a casement: some hundred and fifty, or two hundred, deliberately drawn lines, you will find, in every square quarter of an inch;—say *three thousand to the inch*,—each with skilful intent put in its place! and then consider what the ordinary sketcher's work must appear to the men who have been trained to this!

41. "But might not more have been done by three thousand lines to a square inch?" you will perhaps ask. Well, possibly. It may be with lines as with soldiers: three hundred, knowing their work thoroughly, may be stronger than three thousand less sure of their game. We shall have to press close home this question about numbers and purpose presently;[3]—it is not the question now. Supposing certain results required,—atmospheric effects, surface textures, transparencies of shade, confusions of light,—more could *not* be done with less. There are engravings of this modern school, of which, with respect to their particular aim, it may be said, most truly, they "*cannot* be better done."[4]

42. Whether an engraving should aim at effects of atmosphere, may be disputable (just as also whether a

[1] [*Hamlet*, iii. 2.]
[2] [Psalms xlviii. 11.]
[3] [See the next chapter.]
[4] [See above, pp. 52, 72.]

Digitized by Google

sculptor should aim at effects of perspective); but I do not raise these points to-day. Admit the aim—let us note the patience; nor this in engraving only. I have taken an engraving for my instance, but I might have taken any form of Art. I call upon all good artists, painters, sculptors, metal-workers, to bear witness with me in what I now tell the public in their name,—that the same Fortitude, the same deliberation, the same perseverance in resolute act—is needed to do *anything* in Art that is worthy. And why is it, you workmen, that you are silent always concerning your toil; and mock at us in your hearts, within that shrine at Eleusis, to the gate of which you have hewn your way through so deadly thickets of thorn; and leave us, foolish children, outside, in our conceited thinking either that we can enter it in play, or that we are grander for not entering? Far more earnestly is it to be asked, why do you *stoop* to us as you mock us? If your secrecy were a noble one,—if, in that incommunicant contempt, you wrought your own work with majesty, whether we would receive it or not, it were kindly, though ungraciously, done; but now you make yourselves our toys, and do our childish will in servile silence. If engraving were to come to an end this day, and no guided point should press metal more, do you think it would be in a blaze of glory that your art would expire?—that those plates in the annuals, and black proofs in broad shop windows, are of a nobly monumental character,—"chalybe perennius?"[1] I am afraid your patience has been too much like yonder poor Italian child's; and over that genius of yours, low laid by the Matin shore, if it expired so, the lament for Archytas would have to be sung again;—"pulveris exigui—munera."[2] Suppose you were to shake off the dust again! cleanse your wings, like the morning

[1] [Ruskin here combines Horace (*Odes*, iii. 30, 1: "Exegi monumentum aere *perennius*") with Propertius (i. 16, 30: "ferro durior et *chalybe*").]

[2] [Horace: *Odes*, i. 28: for a note on this passage (whence comes the title *Munera Pulveris*), see Introduction to Vol. XVII. p. lxv.]

Digitized by Google

bees on that Matin promontory;[1] rise, in noble *im*patience, for there is such a thing: the Impatience of the Fourth Cornice.

"Cui buon voler, e giusto amor cavalca."[2]

Shall we try, together, to think over the meaning of that Haste, when the May mornings come?

[1] [Again a reference to Horace; see *Odes*, iv. 2, 27, where the poet describes his work: "Ego apis Matinæ more . . . operosa parvus Carmina fingo." The passage is quoted also in *Queen of the Air*, § 48 (below, p. 349), and *Val d'Arno*, § 221.]

[2] [*Purgatorio*, xviii. 96. On the fourth cornice the sin of indifference is punished; but "hearty zeal to serve reanimates celestial grace," and the poet sees an eager multitude who now "by good will and righteous love are ridden."]

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV[1]

[HASTE]

43. It is a wild March day,—the 20th; and very probably due course of English Spring will bring as wild a May-day by the time this writing meets any one's eyes; but at all events, as yet the days are rough, and as I look out of my fitfully lighted window into the garden,[2] everything seems in a singular hurry. The dead leaves; and yonder two living ones, on the same stalk, tumbling over and over each other on the lawn, like a quaint mechanical toy; and the fallen sticks from the rooks' nests, and the twisted straws out of the stable-yard—all going one way, in the hastiest manner! The puffs of steam, moreover, which pass under the wooded hills where what used to be my sweetest field-walk ends now, prematurely, in an abyss of blue clay; and which signify, in their silvery expiring between the successive trunks of wintry trees, that some human beings, thereabouts, are in a hurry as well as the sticks and straws, and, having fastened themselves to the tail of a manageable breeze, are being blown down to Folkestone.

44. In the general effect of these various passages and passengers, as seen from my quiet room, they look all very much alike. One begins seriously to question with oneself whether those passengers by the Folkestone train are in truth one whit more in a hurry than the dead leaves. The difference consists, of course, in the said passengers knowing where they are going to, and why; and having resolved to go there—which, indeed, as far as Folkestone,

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 129–130. May 1865.]
[2] [At Denmark Hill.]

Digitized by Google

may, perhaps, properly distinguish them from the leaves: but will it distinguish them any farther? Do many of them know what they are going to Folkestone for?—what they are going anywhere for? and where, at last, by sum of all the days' journeys, of which this glittering transit is one, they are going for peace? For if they know not this, certainly they are no more making haste than the straws are. Perhaps swiftly going the wrong way; more likely going no way—any way, as the winds and their own wills, wilder than the winds, dictate; to find themselves at last at the end which would have come to them quickly enough without their seeking.

45. And, indeed, this is a very preliminary question to all measurement of the rate of going, this "where to?" or, even before that, "are we going on at all?"[1]—"getting on" (as the world says) on any road whatever? Most men's eyes are so fixed on the mere swirl of the wheel of their fortunes, and their souls so vexed at the reversed cadences of it when they come, that they forget to ask if the curve they have been carried through on its circumference was circular or cycloidal; whether they have been bound to the ups and downs of a mill-wheel or of a chariot-wheel.

That phrase, of "getting on," so perpetually on our lips[2] (as indeed it should be), do any of us take it to our hearts, and seriously ask where we can get on *to?* That instinct of hurry has surely good grounds. It is all very well for lazy and nervous people (like myself for instance) to retreat into tubs, and holes, and corners, anywhere out of the dust, and wonder within ourselves, "what all the fuss can be about?" The fussy people might have the best of it, if they know their end. Suppose they were to answer this March or May morning thus:—"Not bestir ourselves, indeed! and the spring sun up these four hours!—and this first of May, 1865, never to come back again; and of Firsts of May in perspective, supposing ourselves to be 'nel mezzo

[1] [Compare Vol. XI. p. 258.]
[2] [See Vol. XVIII. pp. 448, 452–453.]

Digitized by Google

del cammin,'[1] perhaps some twenty or twenty-five to be, not without presumption, hoped for, and by no means calculated upon. Say, twenty of them, with their following groups of summer days; and though they may be long, one cannot make much more than sixteen hours a-piece out of them, poor sleepy wretches that we are; for even if we get up at four, we must go to bed while the red yet stays from the sunset: and half the time we are awake, we must be lying among haycocks, or playing at something, if we are wise; not to speak of eating, and previously earning whereof to eat, which takes time: and then, how much of us and of our day will be left for getting on? Shall we have a seventh, or even a tithe, of our twenty-four hours?—two hours and twenty-four minutes clear, a day, or, roughly, a thousand hours a year, and (violently presuming on fortune, as we said) twenty years of working life: twenty thousand hours to get on in, altogether?[2] Many men would think it hard to be limited to an utmost twenty thousand pounds for their fortunes, but here is a sterner limitation; the Pactolus of time, sand, and gold together, would, with such a fortune, count us a pound an hour, through our real and serviceable life. If this time capital would reproduce itself! and for our twenty thousand hours we could get some rate of interest, if well spent? At all events, we will do something with them; not lie moping out of the way of the dust, as you do."

46. A sufficient answer, indeed; yet, friends, if you would *make* a little less dust, perhaps we should all see our way better. But I am ready to take the road with you, if you mean it so seriously—only let us at least consider where we are now, at starting.

Here, on a little spinning, askew-axised thing we call a planet—(impertinently enough, since we are far more planetary ourselves). A round, rusty, rough little metallic

[1] [*Inferno*, i. 1: compare Vol. X. p. 400.]
[2] [Ruskin himself was used to number his days in this way; see the note on his diary in Vol. VII. p. xxiii.]

Digitized by Google

ball—very hard to live upon; most of it much too hot or too cold: a couple of narrow habitable belts about it, which, to wandering spirits, must look like the places where it has got damp, and green-mouldy, with accompanying small activities of animal life in the midst of the lichen. Explosive gases, seemingly, inside it, and possibilities of very sudden dispersion.

47. This is where we are; and round about us, there seem to be more of such balls, variously heated and chilled, ringed and mooned, moved and comforted; the whole giddy group of us forming an atom in a milky mist, itself another atom in a shoreless phosphorescent sea of such Volvoces and Medusae.[1]

Whereupon, I presume, one would first ask, have we any chance of getting off this ball of ours, and getting on to one of those finer ones? Wise people say we have, and that it is very wicked to think otherwise. So we will think no otherwise; but, with their permission, think nothing about the matter now, since it is certain that the more we make of our little rusty world, such as it is, the more chance we have of being one day promoted into a merrier one.

48. And even on this rusty and mouldy Earth, there appear to be things which may be seen with pleasure, and things which might be done with advantage. The stones of it have strange shapes; the plants and the beasts of it strange ways. Its air is coinable into wonderful sounds; its light into manifold colours: the trees of it bring forth pippins, and the fields cheese (though both of these[2] may be, in a finer sense, "to come"). There are bright eyes upon it which reflect the light of other eyes quite singularly; and foolish feelings to be cherished upon it; and gladdenings

[1] [Ruskin is thinking here of the passage from Michelet's *L'Insecte*, which he quoted in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 232): "The navigator, who at night sees the ocean shimmering with lustre and wreathing garlands of fire, is at first diverted by the spectacle . . . yet all this is but a dance of imperceptible animalcules."]

[2] [That is, the trees and the fields; when "the redeemed shall walk there" (Isaiah xxxv. 9).]

Digitized by Google

of dust by neighbour dust, not easily explained, but pleasant, and which take time to win. One would like to know something of all this, I suppose?—to divide one's score of thousand hours as shrewdly as might be. Ten minutes to every herb of the field is not much; yet we shall not know them all, so, before the time comes to be made grass of ourselves! Half-an-hour for every crystalline form of clay and flint, and we shall be near the need of shaping the grey flint stone that is to weigh upon our feet. And we would fain dance a measure or two before that cumber is laid upon them: there having been hitherto much piping to which we have not danced.[1] And we must leave time for loving, if we are to take Marmontel's wise peasant's word for it, "*Il n'y a de bon que ça!*"[2] And if there should be fighting to do also? and weeping? and much burying? truly, we had better make haste.

49. Which means, simply, that we must lose neither strength nor moment. Hurry is not haste; but economy is, and rightness is. Whatever is rightly done stays with us, to support another right beyond, or higher up: whatever is wrongly done, vanishes; and by the blank, betrays what we would have built above. Wasting no word, no thought, no doing, we shall have speed enough; but then there is that farther question, what shall we do?—what we are fittest (worthiest, that is) to do, and what is best worth doing? Note that word "worthy," both of the man and the thing, for the two dignities go together. Is *it* worth the pains? Are we worth the task? The dignity of a man depends wholly upon this harmony. If his task is above him, he will be undignified in failure; if he is above it, he will be undignified in success. His own composure and nobleness must be according to the composure of his thought to his toil.

50. As I was dreaming over this, my eyes fell by chance

[1] [Matthew xi. 17.]
[2] [See *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 17, where Ruskin gives a translation of the passage in the *Contes Moraux*, where these words occur.]

Digitized by Google

on a page of my favourite thirteenth-century psalter,[1] just where two dragons, one with red legs, and another with green,—one with a blue tail on a purple ground, and the other with a rosy tail on a golden ground, follow the verse "*Quis ascendet in montem Domini*," and begin the solemn "*Qui non accepit in vano animam suam.*"[2] Who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity, we have it; and ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ ματαίῳ, the Greek (not that I know what that means accurately): broadly, they all mean, "who has not received nor given his soul in vain": this is the man who can make haste, even uphill, the only haste worth making; and it must be up the right hill, too: not that Corinthian Acropolis, of which, I suppose, the white spectre stood eighteen hundred feet high, in Hades, for Sisyphus to roll his fantastic stone up—image, himself, for ever of the greater part of our wise mortal work.[3]

51. Now all this time, whatever the reader may think, I have never for a moment lost sight of that original black line with which is our own special business.[4] The patience, the speed, the dignity, we can give to that, the choice to be made of subject for it, are the matters I want to get at. You think, perhaps, that an engraver's function is one of no very high dignity;—does not involve a serious choice of work. Consider a little of it. Here is a steel point, and 'tis like Job's "iron pen"[5]—and you are going to cut into steel with it, in a most deliberate way, as into the rock for ever. And this scratch or inscription of yours

[1] [The Psalter of St. Louis.]

[2] [Psalms xxiv. 3, 4: compare *Lectures on Art*, § 95, where Ruskin quotes not the Septuagint but the Vulgate.]

[3] [Here, again, Ruskin's thought is very allusive. He is thinking of the explanation which he had formed in his mind (and which he afterwards gave in *Queen of the Air*, § 29; below, p. 326) of the legend of Sisyphus, the crafty prince of Corinth, in connexion with the Corinthian Acropolis. He took Corinth as the centre, at once of the crossing currents of the winds, and of the commerce, of Greece; and thus contrasts "the right hill" (*in montem Domini*) with the hill which was to him a type of "transit, transfer, or trade, and of the apparent gain from it," which yet is in reality but empty clouds.]

[4] [See above, p. 70.]

[5] [Job xix. 23, 24: "Oh that my words . . . were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever." See below, § 53.]

Digitized by Google

will be seen of a multitude of eyes. It is not like a single picture or a single wall painting; this multipliable work will pass through thousand thousand hands, strengthen and inform innumerable souls, if it be worthy; vivify the folly of thousands if unworthy. Remember, also, it will mix in the very closest manner in domestic life. This engraving will not be gossiped over and fluttered past at private views of academies; listlessly sauntered by in corners of great galleries. Ah, no! This will hang over parlour chimney-pieces—shed down its hourly influence on children's forenoon work. This will hang in little luminous corners by sick beds; mix with flickering dreams by candle-light, and catch the first rays from the window's "glimmering square."[1] You had better put something good into it! I do not know a more solemn field of labour than that *champ d'acier*.[2] From a pulpit, perhaps a man can only reach one or two people, for that time,—even your book, once carelessly read, probably goes into a book-case catacomb, and is thought of no more. But this; taking the eye unawares again and again, and always again: persisting and inevitable! where will you look for a chance of saying something nobly, if it is not here?

52. And the choice is peculiarly free; to you of all men most free. An artist, at first invention, cannot always choose what shall come into his mind, nor know what it will eventually turn into. But you, professed copyists, unless you have mistaken your profession, have the power of governing your own thoughts, and of following and interpreting the thoughts of others. Also, you see the work to be done put plainly before you; you can deliberately choose what seems to you best, out of myriads of examples of perfect Art. You can count the cost accurately; saying, "It will take me a year—two years—five—a fourth

[1] [Tennyson: *The Princess*, iv:—

"Unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square."

The line is quoted in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 459).]

[2] [So in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 12, Ruskin speaks of the old engravers as "masters of the bright field," the steel plate being their field of battle.]

Digitized by Google

or fifth, probably, of my remaining life, to do this." Is the thing worth it? There is no excuse for choosing wrongly; no other men whatever have data so full, and position so firm, for forecast of their labour.

53. I put my psalter aside (not, observe, vouching for its red and green dragons:—men lifted up their souls to vanity[1] sometimes in the thirteenth as in the nineteenth century), and I take up, instead, a book of English verses, published—there is no occasion to say when. It is full of costliest engravings—large, skilful, appallingly laborious; dotted into textures like the dust on a lily leaf,—smoothed through gradations like clouds,—graved to surfaces like mother-of-pearl; and by all this toil there is set forth for the delight of English women, a series of the basest dreams that ungoverned feminine imagination can coin in sickliest indolence,—ball-room amours, combats of curled knights, pilgrimages of disguised girl-pages, romantic pieties, charities in costume,—a mass of disguised sensualism and feverish vanity—impotent, pestilent, prurient, scented with a venomous elixir, and rouged with a deadly dust of outward good; and all this done, as such things only can be done, in a boundless ignorance of all natural veracity; the faces falsely drawn—the lights falsely cast—the forms effaced or distorted, and all common human wit and sense extinguished in the vicious scum of lying sensation.

And this, I grieve to say, is only a characteristic type of a large mass of popular English work. This is what we spend our Teutonic lives in, engraving with an iron pen in the rock for ever; this, the passion of the Teutonic woman (as opposed to Virgilia), just as fox-hunting is the passion of the Teutonic man, as opposed to Valerius.[2]

54. And while we deliberately spend all our strength, and all our tenderness, all our skill, and all our money, in

[1] [See above, § 50. On the grotesques in the Psalter of St. Louis, see *Queen of the Air*, § 71 (below, p. 365); and compare p. 183.]

[2] [For Virgilia, as the "loveliest" of Shakespeare's types of heroic women, see *Sesame and Lilies*, § 56 (Vol. XVIII. p. 112). On fox-hunting, see Vol. VII. p. 340; and for Valerius, as an heroic Roman type, see *Unto this Last*, Preface, § 6 (Vol. XVII. p. 23); and compare *Art of England*, § 160.]

Digitized by Google

doing, relishing, buying, this absolute Wrongness, of which nothing can ever come but disease in heart and brain, remember that all the mighty works of the great painters of the world, full of life, truth, and blessing, remain to this present hour of the year 1865 unengraved! There literally exists no earnestly studied and fully accomplished engraving of any very great work, except Leonardo's Cena. No large Venetian picture has ever been thoroughly engraved. Of Titian's Peter Martyr, there is even no worthy memorial transcript but Lefèbre's. The Cartoons have been multiplied in false readings; never in faithful ones till lately by photography. Of the Disputa and the Parnassus, what can the English public know? of the thoughtful Florentines and Milanese, of Ghirlandajo, and Luini, and their accompanying hosts—what do they yet so much as care to know?[1]

"The English public will not pay," you reply, "for engravings from the great masters. The English public will only pay for pictures of itself; of its races, its rifle-meetings, its rail stations, its parlour-passions, and kitchen interests; you must make your bread as you may, by holding the mirror to it."[2]

55. Friends, there have been hard fighting and heavy sleeping, this many a day, on the other side of the Atlantic, in the cause, as you suppose, of Freedom against slavery; and you are all, open-mouthed, expecting the glories of Black Emancipation. Perhaps a little White Emancipation on this side of the water might be still more desirable, and more easily and guiltlessly won.[3]

[1] [For Ruskin's opinion of the "Last Supper" of Leonardo, see Vol. IV. p. 317, and Vol. VII. p. 328. For Titian's "Peter Martyr," see Vol. III. p. 28; and for references to Lefèbre's engravings, Vol. VII. pp. 95, 224. For Raphael's Cartoons, see Vol. III. p. 29; for the "Disputa," taken by Ruskin as the "type of the Italian School," see Vol. XIV. p. 268, and the other passages there noted; and for the "Parnassus," "the greatest of the Vatican Raphael frescoes," Vol. XI. p. 130. Of the "Parnassus," and of many works by Ghirlandajo and Luini, the Arundel Society afterwards published chromo-lithographs.]

[2] [*Hamlet*, iii. 2, 26.]

[3] [See *Munera Pulveris*, § 130, and the note (Vol. XVII. p. 254); and on the war, *Time and Tide*, § 141 (*ibid.*, pp. 431–433). For the slavery of engraving, compare *Ariadne Florentina*, § 97.]

Digitized by Google

Do you know what slavery means? Supposing a gentleman taken by a Barbary corsair—set to field-work; chained and flogged to it from dawn to eve. Need he be a slave therefore? By no means; he is but a hardly-treated prisoner. There is some work which the Barbary corsair will not be able to make him do; such work as a Christian gentleman may not do, that he will not, though he die for it. Bound and scourged he may be, but he has heard of a Person's being bound and scourged before now, who was not therefore a slave. He is not a whit more slave for that. But suppose he take the pirate's pay, and stretch his back at piratical oars, for due salary, how then? Suppose for fitting price he betray his fellow prisoners, and take up the scourge instead of enduring it—become the smiter instead of the smitten, at the African's bidding—how then? Of all the sheepish notions in our English public "mind," I think the simplest is that slavery is neutralised when you are well paid for it! Whereas it is precisely that fact of its being paid for which makes it complete. A man who has been sold by another, may be but half a slave or none; but the man who has sold himself! He is the accurately Finished Bondsman.

56. And gravely I say that I know *no* captivity so sorrowful as that of an artist doing, consciously, bad work for pay.[1] It is the serfdom of the finest gifts—of all that should lead and master men, offering itself to be spit upon, and that for a bribe. There is much serfdom, in Europe, of speakers and writers, but they only sell words; and their talk, even honestly uttered, might not have been worth much; it will not be thought of ten years hence; still less a hundred years hence. No one will buy our parliamentary speeches to keep in portfolios this time next century; and if people are weak enough now to pay for any special and flattering cadence of syllable, it is little matter. But *you*, with your painfully acquired power, your

[1] [On the ethics of artist's work and pay, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 32, 33 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 412–415).]

Digitized by Google

unwearied patience, your admirable and manifold gifts, your eloquence in black and white, which people will buy, if it is good (and has a broad margin), for fifty guineas a copy—in the year 2000; to sell it all, as Ananias his land, "yea, for so much,"[1] and hold yourselves at every fool's beck, with your ready points, polished and sharp, hasting to scratch what *he* wills! To bite permanent mischief in with acid; to spread an inked infection of evil all your days, and pass away at last from a life of the skilfullest industry—having done whatsoever your hand found (remuneratively) to do, with your might, and a great might, but with cause to thank God only for this—that the end of it all has at last come, and that "there is no device nor work in the Grave."[2] One would get quit of *this* servitude, I think, though we reached the place of Rest a little sooner, and reached it fasting.

57. My English fellow-workmen, you have the name of liberty often on your lips; get the fact of it oftener into your business! talk of it less, and try to understand it better. You have given students many copy-books of free-hand outlines—give them a few of free *heart* outlines.

It appears, however, that you do not intend to help me[3] with any utterance respecting these same outlines.* Be it so: I must make out what I can by myself. And under the influence of the Solstitial sign of June[4] I will go backwards, or askance, to the practical part of the business, where I left it three months ago, and take up that question first, touching Liberty, and the relation of

* I have received some interesting private letters, but cannot make use of them at present, because they enter into general discussion instead of answering the specific question I asked, respecting the power of the black line; and I must observe to correspondents that in future their letters should be addressed to the Editor of this Journal, not to me; as I do not wish to incur the responsibility of selection.

[1] [Acts v. 8.]
[2] [Ecclesiastes ix. 10: often quoted by Ruskin (*e.g.*, Vol. VII. p. 313, Vol. XVIII. p. 175).]
[3] [See Ruskin's invitation above, § 20, p. 70.]
[4] [The crab; see *Art of England*, § 105 ("the great zodiacal crustacean").]

Digitized by Google

the loose swift line to the resolute slow one and of the etched line to the engraved one. It is a worthy question, for the open field afforded by illustrated works is tempting even to our best painters, and many an earnest hour and active fancy spend and speak themselves in the black line, vigorously enough, and dramatically, at all events: if wisely, may be considered. The French also are throwing great passion into their *eaux fortes*—working with a vivid haste and dark, brilliant freedom, which looked as if they etched with very energetic waters indeed—quite waters of life (it does not look so well, written in French). So we will take, with the reader's permission, for text next month, "Rembrandt, and strong waters."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V[1]

["REMBRANDT, AND STRONG WATERS"]

58. THE work I have to do in this paper ought, rightly, to have been thrown into the form of an appendix to the last chapter; for it is no link of the cestus of Aglaia we have to examine, but one of the crests of canine passion in the cestus of Scylla.[2] Nevertheless, the girdle of the Grace cannot be discerned in the full brightness of it, but by comparing it with the dark torment of that other; and (in what place or form matters little) the work has to be done.

"Rembrandt Van Rhyn"—it is said, in the last edition of a very valuable work* (for which, nevertheless, I could wish that greater lightness in the hand should be obtained by the publication of its information in one volume, and its criticism in another) — was "the most attractive and original of painters." It may be so; but there are attractions, and attractions. The sun attracts the planets—and a candle, night-moths; the one with perhaps somewhat of benefit to the planets;—but with what benefit the other

* Wornum's *Epochs of Painting*.[3] I have continual occasion to quarrel with my friend on these matters of critical question; but I have deep respect for his earnest and patient research, and we remain friends—on the condition that I am to learn much from him, and he (though it may be questionable whose fault that is) nothing from me.

---

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. iv. pp. 177–178. June 1865.]

[2] [For "the devouring hound at the waist of Scylla," see *Queen of the Air*, § 39; and for references to "canine passion" in Greek myths of the dog, *ibid.*, § 23 (below, pp. 339, 316).]

[3] [Edition of 1864, 8vo, p. 583. The characterisation of Rembrandt is at p. 416. For other references to R. N. Wornum, see Vol. XIII. pp. xviii., xxxii., xxxvii., 87, 95, 140, 319.]

Digitized by Google

to the moths, one would be glad to learn from those desert flies, of whom, one company having extinguished Mr. Kinglake's candle with their bodies, the remainder, "who had failed in obtaining this martyrdom, became suddenly serious, and clung despondingly to the canvas."[1]

59. Also, there are originalities, and originalities. To invent a new thing, which is also a precious thing; to be struck by a divinely-guided Rod, and become a sudden fountain of life to thirsty multitudes[2]—this is enviable. But to be distinct of men in an original Sin; elect for the initial letter of a Lie; the first apparent spot of an unknown plague; a Root of bitterness,[3] and the first-born worm of a company, studying an original De-Composition, —this is perhaps not so enviable. And if we think of it, most human originality is apt to be of that kind. Goodness is one, and immortal; it may be received and communicated—not originated: but Evil is various and recurrent, and may be misbegotten in endlessly surprising ways.[4]

60. But, that we may know better in what this originality consists, we find that our author, after expatiating on the vast area of the Pantheon, "illuminated solely by the small circular opening in the dome above," and on other similar conditions of luminous contraction, tells us that "to Rembrandt belongs the glory of having first embodied in Art, and perpetuated, these rare and beautiful effects of nature."[5] Such effects are indeed rare in nature; but they are not rare, absolutely. The sky, with the sun in it, does not usually give the impression of being dimly lighted through a circular hole; but you may observe a very similar effect any day in your coal-cellar. The light is not Rembrandtesque on the current, or banks, of a river; but it is on those of a drain. Colour is not

[1] [*Eothen*, ch. xvii. ("The Desert").]
[2] [Exodus xvii. 6.]
[3] [Hebrews xii. 15.]
[4] [Compare Vol. III. p. 14 *n.*, and the references there given.]
[5] [*Epochs of Painting*, p. 421.]

Digitized by Google

Rembrandtesque, usually, in a clean house; but is presently obtainable of that quality in a dirty one. And without denying the pleasantness of the mode of progression which Mr. Hazlitt, perhaps too enthusiastically, describes as attainable in a background of Rembrandt's—"You stagger from one abyss of obscurity to another"[1]—I cannot feel it an entirely glorious speciality to be distinguished, as Rembrandt was, from other great painters, chiefly by the liveliness of his darkness, and the dulness of his light. Glorious, or inglorious, the speciality itself is easily and accurately definable. It is the aim of the best painters to paint the noblest things they can see by sunlight. It was the aim of Rembrandt to paint the foulest things he could see—by rushlight.

61. By rushlight, observe: material and spiritual. As the sun for the outer world; so in the inner world of man, that which "ἐρευνᾷ ταμιεῖα κοιλίας"*—"the candle of God, searching the inmost parts."[2] If that light within become but a more active kind of darkness;—if, abdicating the measuring reed of modesty[3] for sceptre, and ceasing to measure with it, we dip it in such unctuous and inflammable refuse as we can find, and make our soul's light into a *tallow* candle, and thenceforward take our guttering, sputtering, ill-smelling illumination about with us, holding it out in fetid fingers—encumbered with its lurid warmth of fungous wick, and drip of stalactitic grease—that we may see, when another man would have seen, or dreamed he saw, the flight of a divine Virgin—only the lamp-light upon the hair of a costermonger's ass;—that, having to paint the good Samaritan, we may see only in distance the back of the good Samaritan, and in nearness the back of

* Prov. xx. 27.

[1] [*Criticisms on Art*, by William Hazlitt, 1843, p. 15. The passage occurs in a notice of Rembrandt's "Woman taken in Adultery" in the National Gallery (No. 45). For another reference to Hazlitt's criticisms, see Vol. III. p. 350.]

[2] [Septuagint. The Authorised Version has, "The spirit of man is the candle of God searching all the inward parts of the belly."]

[3] [See above, § 22, p. 73.]

Digitized by Google

the good Samaritan's dog;—that having to paint the Annunciation to the Shepherds, we may turn the announcement of peace to men, into an announcement of mere panic to beasts; and, in an unsightly firework of unsightlier angels, see, as we see always, the feet instead of the head, and the shame instead of the honour;[1]—and finally concentrate and rest the sum of our fame, as Titian on the Assumption of a spirit, so we on the dissection of a carcase,[2]—perhaps by such fatuous fire, the less we walk, and by such phosphoric glow, the less we shine, the better it may be for us, and for all who would follow us.

62. Do not think I deny the greatness of Rembrandt. In mere technical power (none of his eulogists know that power better than I, nor declare it in more distinct terms)[3] he might, if he had been educated in a true school, have taken rank with the Venetians themselves. But that type of distinction between Titian's Assumption, and Rembrandt's Dissection, will represent for you with sufficient significance the manner of choice in all their work; only it should be associated with another characteristic example of the same opposition (which I have dwelt upon elsewhere[4]) between Veronese and Rembrandt, in their conception of domestic life. Rembrandt's picture, at Dresden, of himself, with his wife sitting on his knee, a roasted peacock on the table, and a glass of champagne in his hand, is the best work I know of all he has left; and it marks his speciality with entire decision. It is, of course, a dim candlelight; and the choice of the sensual passions as the

[1] [The references here are to the plate of the "Flight into Egypt," 1651 (No. 58 in Eugène Dutuit's *L'Œuvre Complet de Rembrandt*, 1883); the plate of "The Good Samaritan" (see also § 62), 1633 (No. 75 in Dutuit); and the plate of "The Angel appearing to the Shepherds," 1634 (No. 49 in Dutuit): for another note on this last plate, see *Notes on the Educational Series*, No. 236 (Vol. XX.).]

[2] [For other references to Titian's "Assumption," see Vol. VII. pp. 289, 298, and Vol. XI. p. 380. Rembrandt's "Dissection" is the celebrated picture of 1632 in the Hague Museum, "The Lesson in Anatomy:" see below, p. 212.]

[3] [For instance, in *A Joy for Ever*, § 164 (Vol. XVI. p. 151), and see General Index.]

[4] [*Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. chs. iii. and vi. (Vol. VII. pp. 289 *seq.*, 328 *seq.*); and for the picture at Dresden, see *ibid.*, p. 331.]

Digitized by Google

things specially and for ever to be described and immortalized out of his own private life and love, is exactly that "painting the foulest thing by rushlight" which I have stated to be the enduring purpose of his mind. And you will find this hold in all minor treatment; and that to the uttermost: for as by your broken rushlight you see little, and only corners and points of things, and those very corners and points ill and distortedly; so, although Rembrandt knows the human face and hand, and never fails in these, when they are ugly, and he chooses to take pains with them, he knows nothing else: the more pains he takes with even familiar animals, the worse they are (witness the horse in that plate of the Good Samaritan), and any attempts to finish the first scribbled energy of his imaginary lions and tigers, end always only in the loss of the fiendish power and rage which were all he could conceive in an animal.[1]

68. His landscape, and foreground vegetation, I mean afterwards to examine in comparison with Dürer's;[2] but the real calibre and nature of the man are best to be understood by comparing the puny, ill-drawn, terrorless, helpless, beggarly skeleton in his "Youth Surprised by Death,"[3] with the figure behind the tree in Dürer's plate (though it is quite one of Dürer's feeblest) of the same subject. Absolutely ignorant of all natural phenomena and law; absolutely careless of all lovely living form, or growth, or structure; able only to render with some approach to veracity, what alone he had looked at with some approach to attention,—the pawnbroker's festering heaps of old clothes, and caps, and shoes—Rembrandt's execution is one grand evasion, and his temper the grim contempt of a strong and sullen animal in its defiled den, for the humanity

[1] [Several hunting scenes, with lions, etched in a slight and rough manner, by Rembrandt, may be seen in the British Museum; as also many similar drawings in pen, bistre, and bistre wash.]

[2] [A reference to the intended, but unwritten, sequel.]

[3] [Rembrandt's plate of this subject is rare; a copy may be seen in the British Museum. It is No. 110 in Dutuit's *L'Œuvre Complet de Rembrandt*. Dürer's plate is that entitled "The Promenade."]

Digitized by Google

with which it is at war, for the flowers which it tramples, and the light which it fears.

64. Again, do not let it be thought that when I call his execution evasive, I ignore the difference between his touch, on brow or lip, and a common workman's; but the whole school of etching which he founded (and of painting, so far as it differs from Venetian work) is inherently loose and experimental. Etching is the very refuge and mask of sentimental uncertainty, and of vigorous ignorance.[1] If you know anything clearly, and have a firm hand, depend upon it, you will draw it clearly; you will not care to hide it among scratches and burrs. And herein is the first grand distinction between etching and engraving—that in the etching needle you have an almost irresistible temptation to a wanton speed. There is, however, no real necessity for such a distinction; an etched line may have been just as steadily drawn, and seriously meant, as an engraved one; and for the moment, waiving consideration of this distinction, and opposing Rembrandt's work, considered merely as work of the black line, to Holbein's and Dürer's, as work of the black line, I assert Rembrandt's to be inherently *evasive*. You cannot unite his manner with theirs; choice between them is sternly put to you, when first you touch the steel. Suppose, for instance, you have to engrave, or etch, or draw with pen and ink, a single head, and that the head is to be approximately half an inch in height more or less (there is a reason for assigning this condition respecting size, which we will examine in due time)[2]: you have it in your power to do it in one

[1] [This much-questioned dictum is repeated and enforced in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 180 ("etching is an indolent and blundering method at the best"). To the "coarseness and rudeness" of his own early essays in the art, he refers in the Preface to *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. p. 4). In the *Elements of Drawing* he recommends the copying of Rembrandt's etchings, for the "steady purpose" even in "the most rapid lines" of that master (Vol. XV. p. 78, and compare the remarks on Turner's etchings, *ibid.*, p. 121). In *The Art of England*, § 130, he says that in etching, "though a great quantity of the shade is mere burr and scrabble and blotch, a certain quantity of real care and skill *must* be spent in covering the surface at first." For other remarks on the virtues, faults, and limitations of etching, see the paper on Mr. Ernest George in Vol. XIV. pp. 335–338.]

[2] [Again a reference to the intended, but unwritten, sequel.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Cannon

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

of two ways. You may lay down some twenty or thirty entirely firm and visible lines, of which every one shall be absolutely right, and do the utmost a line can do. By their curvature they shall render contour; by their thickness, shade; by their place and form, every truth of expression, and every condition of design. The head of the soldier drawing his sword, in Dürer's "Cannon,"[1] is about half an inch high, supposing the brow to be seen. The chin is drawn with three lines, the lower lip with two, the upper, including the shadow from the nose, with five. Three separate the cheek from the chin, giving the principal points of character. Six lines draw the cheek, and its incised traces of care; four are given to each of the eyes; one, with the outline, to the nose; three to the frown of the forehead. None of these touches could anywhere be altered—none removed, without instantly visible harm; and their result is a head as perfect in character as a portrait by Reynolds.

65. You may either do this—which, if you can, it will generally be very advisable to do—or, on the other hand, you may cover the face with innumerable scratches, and let your hand play with wanton freedom, until the graceful scrabble concentrates itself into shade. You may soften—efface—retouch—rebite—dot, and hatch, and redefine. If you are a great master, you will soon get your character, and probably keep it (Rembrandt often gets it at first, nearly as securely as Dürer); but the design of it will be necessarily seen through loose work, and modified by accident (as you think) fortunate. The accidents which occur to a practised hand are always at first pleasing—the details which can be hinted, however falsely, through the gathering mystery, are always seducing. You will find yourself gradually dwelling more and more on little meannesses of form and texture, and lustres of surface: on cracks of skin, and films of fur and plume. You will lose your way, and

[1] [For other references to this plate (here reproduced), see above, § 19, p. 69; Vol. VII. p. 305 (where a portion is given), and Vol. XV. p. 85.]

Digitized by Google

then see two ways, and then many ways, and try to walk a little distance on all of them in turn, and so, back again. You will find yourself thinking of colours, and vexed because you cannot imitate them; next, struggling to render distances by indecision, which you cannot by tone. Presently you will be contending with finished pictures; labouring at the etching, as if it were a painting. You will leave off, after a whole day's work (after many days' work if you choose to give them), still unsatisfied. For final result—if you are as great as Rembrandt—you will have most likely a heavy, black, cloudy stain, with less character in it than the first ten lines had. If you are not as great as Rembrandt, you will have a stain by no means cloudy; but sandy and broken,—instead of a face, a speckled phantom of a face, patched, blotched, discomfited in every texture and form—ugly, assuredly; dull, probably; an unmanageable and manifold failure ill concealed by momentary, accidental, undelightful, ignoble success.

Undelightful; note this especially, for it is the peculiar character of etching that it cannot render beauty. You may hatch and scratch your way to picturesqueness or to deformity—never to beauty. You can etch an old woman, or an ill-conditioned fellow. But you cannot etch a girl—nor, unless in his old age, or with very partial rendering of him, a gentleman.

66. And thus, as farther belonging to, and partly causative of, their choice of means, there is always a tendency in etchers to fasten on unlovely objects; and the whole scheme of modern rapid work of this kind is connected with a peculiar gloom which results from the confinement of men, partially informed, and wholly untrained, in the midst of foul and vicious cities. A sensitive and imaginative youth, early driven to get his living by his art, has to lodge, we will say, somewhere in the by-streets of Paris, and is left there, tutorless, to his own devices. Suppose him also vicious or reckless, and there need be no talk of his work farther; he will certainly do nothing in a

Digitized by Google

Düreresque manner. But suppose him self-denying, virtuous, full of gift and power—what are the elements of living study within his reach? All supreme beauty is confined to the higher salons. There are pretty faces in the streets, but no stateliness nor splendour of humanity; all pathos and grandeur is in suffering; no purity of nature is accessible, but only a terrible picturesqueness, mixed with ghastly, with ludicrous, with base concomitants. Huge walls and roofs, dark on the sunset sky, but plastered with advertisement bills, monstrous-figured, seen farther than ever Parthenon shaft, or spire of Sainte Chapelle. Interminable lines of massy streets, wearisome with repetition of commonest design, and degraded by their gilded shops, wide-fuming, flaunting, glittering, with apparatus of eating or of dress. Splendour of palace-flank and goodly quay, insulted by floating cumber of barge and bath, trivial, grotesque, indecent, as cleansing vessels in a royal reception room. Solemn avenues of blossomed trees, shading puppet-show and baby-play; glades of wild-wood, long withdrawn, purple with faded shadows of blood; sweet windings and reaches of river far among the brown vines and white orchards, checked here by the Ile Nôtre Dame, to receive their nightly sacrifice, and after playing with it among their eddies, to give it up again, in those quiet shapes that lie on the sloped slate tables of the square-built Temple of the Death-Sibyl, who presides here over spray of Seine, as yonder at Tiber over spray of Anio.[1] Sibylline, indeed, in her secrecy, and her sealing of destinies, by the baptism of the quick water-drops which fall on each fading face, unrecognized, nameless in *this* Baptism for ever. Wreathed thus throughout, that Paris town, with beauty, and with unseemly sin, unseemlier death, as a fiend-city with fair eyes; for ever letting fall her silken raiment so far as that one may "behold her bosom and half her side."[2] Under

[1] [For another allusion to the Morgue at Paris, see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 15; and to the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli, Vol. IX. p. 12.]
[2] [Coleridge: *Christabel*, line 252.]

Digitized by Google

whose whispered teaching, and substitution of *Contes Drôlatiques*[1] for the tales of the wood fairy, her children of Imagination will do, what Gérome[2] and Gustave Doré are doing, and her whole world of lesser Art will sink into shadows of the street and of the boudoir-curtain, wherein the etching point may disport itself with freedom enough.*

* As I was preparing these sheets for press, I chanced on a passage in a novel of Champfleury's, in which one young student is encouraging another in his contest with these and other such evils;—the evils are in this passage accepted as necessities; the inevitable deadliness of the element is not seen, as it can hardly be except by those who live out of it. The encouragement, on such view, is good and right; the connection of the young etcher's power with his poverty is curiously illustrative of the statements in the text, and the whole passage, though long, is well worth such space as it will ask here, in our small print.

"Cependant," dit Thomas, "on a vu des peintres de talent qui étaient partis de Paris après avoir exposé de bons tableaux et qui s'en revenaient classiquement ennuyeux. C'est donc la faute de l'enseignement de l'Académie."

"Bah!" dit Gérard, "rien n'arrête le développement d'un homme de talent: ni la misère, ni la maladie, ni les faux conseils, ni les mauvais enseignements. Nous sommes environnés d'ennuyeux, d'imbéciles, de traîtres, de lâches; si nous sommes forts, nous devons nous débarrasser de tous ces ennemis. Si nous n'avons pas le courage, c'est-à-dire une conviction profonde de l'art, nous succumbons, tant pis, il n'y a rien à dire. Nous ne sommes pas des victimes, nous n'étions pas dignes de faire de l'art, et nous sommes entrés pas erreur dans ce beau et rude chemin qui mène à la popularité. On est doué, ou on ne l'est pas."

. . . . . .

"Pourtant j'ai connu plus d'un peintre que la misère a paralysé complètement, et qui, avec un peu d'aide, eût produit de belles choses. Au lieu de cela, il est tombé dans les mains des marchands, et il s'est livré à de honteuses lithographies."

"C'est qu'il était né pour faire de pareilles lithographies."

"Mais," dit Thomas, "il pleure d'être obligé de faire du commerce."

"Il fait semblant de pleurer."

"Non, non," dit Thomas.

"Alors il se trompe sur lui-même: puisqu'il comprend l'art, pourquoi ne fait-il pas d'art?"

"Parce qu'il gagne à peu près sa vie en faisant du commerce."

"On dirait que tu ne veux pas me comprendre, toi qui as justement

[1] [See for a criticism of Doré's illustrations to Balzac, *Time and Tide*, § 30 (Vol. XVII. p. 344).]

[2] [For other references to Gérome, see Vol. XV. p. 497 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

67. Nor are we slack in our companionship in these courses. Our imagination is slower and clumsier than the French—rarer also, by far, in the average English mind. The only man of power equal to Doré's whom we have had lately among us, was William Blake,[1] whose temper fortunately took another turn. But in the calamity and

passé par là. Comment faisais-tu quand tu étais compositeur d'une imprimerie?"

"Le soir," dit Thomas, "et le matin en hiver, à partir de quatre heures, je faisais des études à la lampe pendant deux heures, jusqu'au moment où j'allais à l'atelier."

"Et tu ne vivais pas de la peinture?"

"Je ne gagnais pas un sou."

"Bon!" dit Gérard; "tu vois bien que tu faisais du commerce en dehors de l'art et que cependant tu étudiais. Quand tu es sorti de l'imprimerie, comment as-tu vécu?"

"Je faisais cinq ou six petites aquarelles par jour, que je vendais, sous les arcades de l'Institut, six sous pièce."

"Et tu en vivais; c'est encore du commerce. Tu vois donc que ni l'imprimerie, ni les petits dessins, à cinq sous, ni la privation, ni la misère ne t'ont empêché d'arriver."

"Je ne suis pas arrivé."

"N'importe, tu arriveras certainement. . . . Si tu veux d'autres exemples qui prouvent que la misère et les autres piéges tendus sous nos pas ne doivent rien arrêter, tu te rappelles bien ce pauvre garçon dont vous admiriez les eaux-fortes, que vous mettiez aussi haut que Rembrandt, et qui aurait été loin, disiez-vous, s'il n'avait tant souffert de la faim. Qu'a-t-il fait le jour où il lui est tombé un petit héritage du ciel?"

"Il est vrai," dit Thomas, embarrassé; "qu'il a perdu tout son sentiment."

"Ce n'était pas cependant une de ces grosses fortunes qui tuent un homme, qui le rendent lourd, fier et insolent: il avait juste de quoi vivre, six cents francs de rentes, une fortune pour lui, qui vivait avec cinq francs par mois. Il a continué à travailler; mais ses eaux-fortes n'étaient plus supportables; tandis qu'avant, il vivait avec un morceau de pain et des légumes; alors il avait du talent. Cela, Thomas, doit te prouver que ni les mauvais enseignements, ni les influences, ni la misère, ni la faim, ni la maladie, ne peuvent corrompre une nature bien douée. Elle souffre; mais trouve moi un grand artiste qui n'ait pas souffert. Il n'y a pas un seul homme de génie heureux depuis que l'humanité existe."

"J'ai envie," dit Thomas, "de te faire cadeau d'une jolie cravate."

"Pourquoi?" dit Gérard.

"Parce que tu as bien parlé."

---

[1] [See above, § 4, p. 56.]

Digitized by Google

vulgarity of daily circumstance, in the horror of our streets, in the discordance of our thoughts, in the laborious looseness and ostentatious cleverness of our work, we are alike. And to French faults we add a stupidity of our own; for which, so far as I may in modesty take blame for anything, as resulting from my own teaching, I am more answerable than most men. Having spoken earnestly against painting without thinking, I now find our exhibitions decorated with works of students who think without painting;[1] and our books illustrated by scratched woodcuts, representing very ordinary people, who are presumed to be interesting in the picture, because the text tells a story about them. Of this least lively form of modern sensational work, however, I shall have to speak on other grounds; meantime, I am concerned only with its manner; its incontinence of line and method, associated with the slightness of its real thought, and morbid acuteness of irregular sensation; ungoverned all, and one of the external and slight phases of that beautiful Liberty which we are proclaiming as essence of gospel to all the earth, and shall presently, I suppose, when we have had enough of it here, proclaim also to the stars, with invitation to them *out* of their courses.[2]

68. "But you asked us for 'free-heart' outlines, and told us not to be slaves, only thirty days ago."[3]

Inconsistent that I am![4] so I did. But as there are attractions, and attractions; originalities, and originalities, there are liberties, and liberties.[5] Yonder torrent, crystal-clear, and arrow-swift, with its spray leaping into the air like white troops of fawns, is free, I think. Lost, yonder, amidst bankless, boundless marsh—soaking in slow shallowness, as it will, hither and thither, listless, among the

[1] [See Vol. III. p. 88 *n.*, and compare Vol. XIV. p. 65.]

[2] [See Judges v. 20.]

[3] [In the paper in the preceding number of the *Art Journal*: see above, § 57, p. 105.]

[4] [Compare Vol. V. p. liv. *n.*; Vol. VII. p. 356; Vol. XVI. p. 187.]

[5] [The passage from "there are liberties and liberties" to the end of the chapter was used again by Ruskin, with alterations, in *Queen of the Air*, § 143: see below, p. 409.]

Digitized by Google

poisonous reeds and unresisting slime—it is free also. You may choose which liberty you will, and restraint of voiceful rock, or the dumb and edgeless shore of darkened sand. Of that evil liberty, which men are now glorifying,—and of its opposite continence—which is the clasp and χρυσέη περόνη[1] of Aglaia's cestus—we will try to find out something in next chapter.

[1] [*Iliad*, v. 425.]

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI[1]

[LIBERTY]

69. No quality of Art has been more powerful in its influence on public mind; none is more frequently the subject of popular praise, or the end of vulgar effort, than what we call "Freedom." It is necessary to determine the justice or injustice of this popular praise.

70. I said, a little while ago, that the practical teaching of the masters of Art was summed by the o of Giotto.[2] Yet that cipher may become, if rightly read, an expression of infinity, at least in one direction of teaching.[3] "You may judge my masterhood of craft," Giotto tells us, "by seeing that I can draw a circle unerringly." And we may safely believe him, understanding him to mean, that—though more may be necessary to an artist than such a power—at least *this* power is necessary. The qualities of hand and eye needful to do this are the first conditions of artistic craft.

71. Try to draw a circle yourself with the "free" hand, and with a single line. You cannot do it if your hand trembles, nor if it hesitates, nor if it is unmanageable, nor if it is in the common sense of the word "free." So far from being free, it must be under a control as absolute and accurate as if it were fastened to an inflexible bar of steel. And yet it must move, under this necessary control, with perfect, untormented serenity of ease.

72. That is the condition of all good work whatsoever.

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 197–199, July 1865. §§ 69–85 here were reprinted in *Queen of the Air*, §§ 143–159 (see below, p. 409).]

[2] [See above, § 11, p. 63.]

[3] [The sentence "Yet . . . teaching" was omitted in *Queen of the Air*.]

Digitized by Google

All freedom is error. Every line you lay down is either right or wrong: it may be timidly and awkwardly wrong, or fearlessly and impudently wrong: the aspect of the impudent wrongness is pleasurable to vulgar persons; and is what they commonly call "free" execution: the timid, tottering, hesitating wrongness is rarely so attractive; yet sometimes, if accompanied with good qualities, and right aims in other directions, it becomes in a manner charming, like the inarticulateness of a child: but, whatever the charm or manner of the error there is but one question ultimately to be asked respecting every line you draw, Is it right or wrong? If right, it most assuredly is not a "free" line, but an intensely continent, restrained, and considered line; and the action of the hand in laying it is just as decisive, and just as "free" as the hand of a first-rate surgeon in a critical incision. A great operator told me that his hand could check itself within about the two-hundredth of an inch, in penetrating a membrane; and this, of course, without the help of sight, by sensation only. With help of sight, and in action on a substance which does not quiver nor yield, a fine artist's line is measurable in its purposed direction to considerably less than the thousandth of an inch.[1]

A wide freedom, truly!

73. The conditions of popular art which most foster the common ideas about freedom, are merely results of irregularly energetic effort by men imperfectly educated; these conditions being variously mingled with cruder mannerisms resulting from timidity, or actual imperfection of body. Northern hands and eyes are, of course, never so subtle as Southern; and in very cold countries, artistic execution is palsied. The effort to break through this timidity, or to refine the bluntness, may lead to a licentious impetuosity, or an ostentatious minuteness. Every man's manner has this kind of relation to some defect in his physical powers or modes of thought; so that in the greatest work there

[1] [On this point, see Vol. XIII. pp. 334–336.]

Digitized by Google

is no manner visible.[1] It is at first uninteresting from its quietness; the majesty of restrained power only dawns gradually upon us, as we walk towards its horizon.

There is, indeed, often great delightfulness in the innocent manners of artists who have real power and honesty, and draw, in this way or that, as best they can, under such and such untoward circumstances of life.[2] Thus the execution of Prout was that of a master with great and true sentiment for the pathos of ruin, with great and ready power of the arrangement of masses, and fine sense of light and shade; but uneducated,[3] and near-sighted. Make a scholar of such an one, and give him good eyes, and it is impossible for him ever to draw in that way again; how he would have drawn, one cannot say; but it would have been wholly and exaltedly otherwise. The execution of Cox is merely a condition of Northern palsy, through which, in a blundering way, a true sense of certain modes of colour, and of the sweetness of certain natural scenes, finds innocent expression.

So even with great old William Hunt: whatever was peculiar in his execution, broken, spotty, or clumsy, is the character of a rustic, partly of a physically feeble hand; the exquisite truth which is seen by the subtle mind, gives a charm to the expression, as to a country dialect.[4] But the greater part of the looseness, flimsiness, or audacity of modern work is the expression of an inner spirit of licence[5] in mind

[1] [In the original paper this passage reads:—

"The effort . . . the bluntness, leads, in some of the greatest Northern masters, to a licentious sweep and stormy impetuosity of hand, or, in the meanest, to an ostentatious and microscopic minuteness. Every man's manner has relation to his physical powers and modes of thought, but in the greatest work there is no manner visible."]

[2] [Compare *Two Paths*, Vol. XVI. p. 300 and *n.*]

[3] [Compare Vol. XII. pp. 305 *seq.*, and Vol. XIV. p. 375; and for Prout's short-sightedness, Vol. XII. p. 362. For Cox, see Vol. III. p. 46 *n.*]

[4] [In the *Queen of the Air*, the above passage "Thus the execution of Prout . . . dialect" was omitted.]

[5] [In the original paper this passage reads:—

"But the looseness and flimsiness of modern etching and wood engraving are very different from these manners, and far less pardonable; being more or less affected, and in great part the expression of an inner spirit of licence . . ."]

Digitized by Google

and heart, connected, as I said, with the peculiar folly of this age, its hope of, and trust in, "liberty." Of which we must reason a little in more general terms.

74. I believe we can nowhere find a better type of a perfectly free creature than in the common house fly.[1] Nor free only, but brave; and irreverent to a degree which I think no human republican could by any philosophy exalt himself to. There is no courtesy in him; he does not care whether it is king or clown whom he teases; and in every step of his swift mechanical march, and in every pause of his resolute observation, there is one and the same expression of perfect egotism, perfect independence and self-confidence, and conviction of the world's having been made for flies. Strike at him with your hand; and to him, the mechanical fact and external aspect of the matter is, what to you it would be, if an acre of red clay, ten feet thick, tore itself up from the ground in one massive field, hovered over you in the air for a second, and came crashing down with an aim. That is the external aspect of it; the inner aspect, to his fly's mind, is of a quite natural and unimportant occurrence—one of the momentary conditions of his active life. He steps out of the way of your hand, and alights on the back of it. You cannot terrify him, nor govern him, nor persuade him, nor convince him. He has his own positive opinion on all matters; not an unwise one, usually, for his own ends; and will ask no advice of yours. He has no work to do—no tyrannical instinct to obey. The earthworm has his digging; the bee her gathering and building; the spider her cunning network; the ant her treasury and accounts. All these are comparatively slaves, or people of vulgar business. But your fly, free in the air, free in the chamber—a black incarnation of caprice—wandering, investigating, flitting, flirting, feasting at his will, with rich variety

[1] [See *Queen of the Air*, § 35 (below, p. 332), for a reference to this passage. Compare *Two Paths*, § 191 (Vol. XVI. p. 407), where Ruskin similarly takes the fish as a type of a "free" being. See also *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 137 (Vol. XVIII. p. 497). And for another passage on the fly, see *Love's Meinie*, §§ 42–43.]

Digitized by Google

of choice in feast, from the heaped sweets in the grocer's window to those of the butcher's back-yard, and from the galled place on your cab-horse's back, to the brown spot in the road, from which, as the hoof disturbs him, he rises with angry republican buzz—what freedom is like his?

75. For captivity, again, perhaps your poor watch-dog is as sorrowful a type as you will easily find. Mine certainly is. The day is lovely, but I must write this, and cannot go out with him. He is chained in the yard, because I do not like dogs in rooms, and the gardener does not like dogs in gardens. He has no books,—nothing but his own weary thoughts for company, and a group of those free flies whom he snaps at, with sudden ill success. Such dim hope as he may have that I may yet take him out with me, will be, hour by hour, wearily[1] disappointed; or, worse, darkened at once into a leaden despair by an authoritative "No"—too well understood. His fidelity only seals his fate; if he would not watch for me, he would be sent away, and go hunting with some happier master: but he watches, and is wise, and faithful, and miserable: and his high animal intellect only gives him the wistful powers of wonder, and sorrow, and desire, and affection, which embitter his captivity. Yet of the two, would we rather be watch-dog, or fly?

76. Indeed, the first point we have all to determine is not how free we are, but what kind of creatures we are. It is of small importance to any of us whether we get liberty; but of the greatest that we deserve it. Whether we can win it, fate must determine; but that we will be worthy of it, we may ourselves determine; and the sorrowfullest fate, of all that we can suffer, is to have it, *without* deserving it.

77. I have hardly patience to hold my pen and go on writing, as I remember (I would that it were possible for a few consecutive instants to forget) the infinite follies of

[1] ["Wearily" was inserted in the reprint in *Queen of the Air;* and a few lines lower, "power" in the original article was there corrected to "powers."]

Digitized by Google

modern thought in this matter, centred in the notion that liberty is good for a man, irrespectively of the use he is likely to make of it. Folly unfathomable! unspeakable! unendurable to look in the full face of, as the laugh of a cretin. You will send your child, will you, into a room where a table is loaded with sweet wine and fruit—some poisoned, some not?—you will say to him, "Choose freely, my little child! It is so good for you to have freedom of choice; it forms your character—your individuality! If you take the wrong cup, or the wrong berry, you will die before the day is over, but you will have acquired the dignity of a Free child"?

78. You think that puts the case too sharply? I tell you, lover of liberty, there is no choice offered to you, but it is similarly between life and death. There is no act, nor option of act, possible, but the wrong deed, or option, has poison in it, which will stay in your veins thereafter for ever. Never more to all eternity can you be as you might have been, had you not done that—chosen that. You have "formed your character," forsooth! No! if you have chosen ill, you have Deformed it, and that for ever! In some choices, it had been better for you that a red-hot iron bar had struck you aside, scarred and helpless, than that you had so chosen. "You will know better next time!" No. Next time will never come. Next time the choice will be in quite another aspect—between quite different things,—you, weaker than you were by the evil into which you have fallen; it, more doubtful than it was, by the increased dimness of your sight. No one ever gets wiser by doing wrong, nor stronger. You will get wiser and stronger only by doing right, whether forced or not; the prime, the one need is to do *that*, under whatever compulsion, till you can do it without compulsion. And then you are a Man.

79. "What!" a wayward youth might perhaps answer, incredulously; "no one ever gets wiser by doing wrong? Shall I not know the world best by trying the wrong of it, and repenting? Have I not, even as it is, learned much

Digitized by Google

by many of my errors?" Indeed, the effort by which partially you recovered yourself was precious; that part of your thought by which you discerned the error was precious. What wisdom and strength you kept, and rightly used, are rewarded; and in the pain and the repentance, and in the acquaintance with the aspects of folly and sin, you have learned *something;* how much less than you would have learned in right paths, can never be told, but that it *is* less is certain. Your liberty of choice has simply destroyed for you so much life and strength, never regainable. It is true you now know the habits of swine, and the taste of husks:[1] do you think your father could not have taught you to know better habits and pleasanter tastes, if you had stayed in his house; and that the knowledge you have lost would not have been more, as well as sweeter, than that you have gained? But "it so forms my individuality to be free!" Your individuality was given you by God, and in your race; and if you have any to speak of, you will want no liberty. You will want a den to work in, and peace, and light—no more,—in absolute need; if more, in anywise, it will still not be liberty, but direction, instruction, reproof, and sympathy. But if you have no individuality, if there is no true character nor true desire in you, then you will indeed want to be free. You will begin early; and, as a boy, desire to be a man; and, as a man, think yourself as good as every other. You will choose freely to eat, freely to drink, freely to stagger and fall, freely, at last, to curse yourself and die. Death is the only real freedom[2] possible to us: and that is consummate freedom,—permission for every particle in the rotting body to leave its neighbour particle, and shift for itself. You call it "corruption" in the flesh; but before it comes to that, all liberty is an equal corruption in mind. You ask for freedom of thought; but if you have not sufficient

[1] [Luke xv. 16: compare the notes on the parable of the Prodigal Son in *Time and Tide* (Vol. XVII. pp. 458 *seq.*).]

[2] [In the original paper: "That is the only and final freedom."]

Digitized by Google

grounds for thought, you have no business to think; and if you have sufficient grounds, you have no business to think wrong. Only one thought is possible to you, if you are wise — your liberty is geometrically proportionate to your folly.

80. "But all this glory and activity of our age; what are they owing to, but to our freedom of thought?" In a measure, they are owing—what good is in them—to the discovery of many lies, and the escape from the power of evil. Not to liberty, but to the deliverance from evil or cruel masters.[1] Brave men have dared to examine lies which had long been taught, not because they were *free*-thinkers, but because they were such stern and close thinkers that the lie could no longer escape them. Of course the restriction of thought, or of its expression, by persecution, is merely a form of violence, justifiable or not, as other violence is, according to the character of the persons against whom it is exercised, and the divine and eternal laws which it vindicates or violates. We must not burn a man alive for saying that the Athanasian creed is ungrammatical, nor stop a bishop's salary because we are getting the worst of an argument with him; neither must we let drunken men howl in the public streets at night. There is much that is true in the part of Mr. Mill's essay on Liberty which treats of freedom of thought;[2] some important truths are there beautifully expressed, but many, quite vital, are omitted; and the balance, therefore, is wrongly struck. The liberty of expression, with a great nation, would become like that in a well-educated company, in which there is indeed freedom of speech, but not of clamour; or like that in an ordinary senate, in which men who deserve to be heard, are heard in due time, and under determined restrictions. The degree of liberty you can rightly grant to a number of men is commonly in the inverse ratio of their desire for it; and a general hush, or

[1] [In the original paper: "deliverance from an evil or cruel master."]
[2] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 229 *n.*).]

Digitized by Google

call to order, would be often very desirable in this England of ours. For the rest, of any good or evil extant, it is impossible to say what measure is owing to restraint, and what to licence, where the right is balanced between them. I was not a little provoked one day, a summer or two since in Scotland,[1] because the Duke of Athol hindered me from examining the gneiss and slate junctions in Glen Tilt, at the hour convenient to me: but I saw them at last, and in quietness; and to the very restriction that annoyed me, owed, probably, the fact of their being in existence, instead of being blasted away by a mob-company; while the "free" paths and inlets of Loch Katrine and the Lake of Geneva are for ever trampled down and destroyed, not by one duke, but by tens of thousands of ignorant tyrants.

81. So, a Dean and Chapter may, perhaps, unjustifiably charge me twopence for seeing a cathedral;[2]—but your free mob pulls spire and all down about my ears, and I can see it no more for ever. And even if I cannot get up to the granite junctions in the glen, the stream comes down from them pure to the Garry: but in Beddington Park I am stopped by the newly erected fence of a building speculator; and the bright Wandel (Pope's "blue transparent Wandle"[3]), of divine waters as Castaly, is filled by the free public with old shoes, obscene crockery, and ashes.

82. In fine, the arguments for liberty may in general be summed in a few very simple forms, as follows:—

Misguiding is mischievous: therefore guiding is.

If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch:[4] therefore, nobody should lead anybody.

Lambs and fawns should be left free in the fields; much more bears and wolves.

[1] [In August 1857.]

[2] [In the original paper: "unjustifiably hinder me from seeing a cathedral without paying twopence."]

[3] [*Windsor Forest*, 345. For other references to the Wandel, see *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 1 (Vol. XVIII. p. 385); *Lectures on Art*, § 119; *Bible of Amiens*, i. § 1; *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 48; and *Præterita*, i. § 1 ("The Springs of Wandel").]

[4] [Matthew xv. 14.]

Digitized by Google

If a man's gun and shot are his own, he may fire in any direction he pleases.

A fence across a road is inconvenient; much more one at the side of it.

Babes should not be swaddled with their hands bound down to their sides: therefore they should be thrown out to roll in the kennels naked.

None of these arguments are good, and the practical issues of them are worse. For there are certain eternal laws for human conduct which are quite clearly discernible by human reason. So far as these are discovered and obeyed, by whatever machinery or authority the obedience is procured, there follow life and strength. So far as they are disobeyed, by whatever good intention the disobedience is brought about, there follow ruin and sorrow.[1] And the first duty of every man in the world is to find his true master,[2] and, for his own good, submit to him; and to find his true inferior, and, for that inferior's good, conquer him. The punishment is sure, if we either refuse the reverence, or are too cowardly and indolent to enforce the compulsion. A base nation crucifies or poisons its wise men, and lets its fools rave and rot in its streets. A wise nation obeys the one, restrains the other, and cherishes all.

83. The best examples of the results of wise normal discipline in Art will be found in whatever evidence remains respecting the lives of great Italian painters; though, unhappily, in eras of progress, but just in proportion to the admirableness and efficiency of the life, will be usually the scantiness of its history. The individualities and liberties which are causes of destruction may be recorded; but the loyal conditions of daily breath are never told. Because Leonardo made models of machines, dug canals, built fortifications, and dissipated half his art-power in capricious ingenuities, we have many anecdotes of him;—but no picture

[1] [The original paper reads "impotence and dissolution" for "ruin and sorrow"; three lines lower, omits "for that inferior's good"; and in the last line of § 82, reads "disciplines" for "cherishes."]

[2] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1882, and *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 137 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 51, 497).]

Digitized by Google

of importance on canvas, and only a few withered stains of one upon a wall.[1] But because his pupil, or reputed pupil, Luini, laboured in constant and successful simplicity, we have no anecdotes of him;—only hundreds of noble works. Luini is, perhaps, the best central type of the highly trained Italian painter.[2] He is the only man who entirely united the religious temper which was the spirit-life of art, with the physical power which was its bodily life. He joins the purity and passion of Angelico to the strength of Veronese: the two elements, poised in perfect balance, are so calmed and restrained, each by the other, that most of us lose the sense of both. The artist does not see the strength, by reason of the chastened spirit in which it is used; and the religious visionary does not recognize the passion, by reason of the frank human truth with which it is rendered. He is a man ten times greater than Leonardo;—a mighty colourist, while Leonardo was only a fine draughtsman in black, staining the chiaroscuro drawing, like a coloured print: he perceived and rendered the delicatest types of human beauty that have been painted since the days of the Greeks, while Leonardo depraved his finer instincts by caricature, and remained to the end of his days the slave of an archaic smile: and he is a designer as frank, instinctive, and exhaustless as Tintoret, while Leonardo's design is only an agony of science, admired chiefly because it is painful, and capable of analysis in its best accomplishment. Luini has left nothing behind him that is not lovely;[3] but of his life I believe hardly anything is known beyond remnants of tradition which murmur about Lugano and Saronno, and which remain ungleaned. This only is certain, that he was born in the loveliest district of North Italy, where hills, and streams, and air, meet in softest harmonies.[4] Child of the Alps, and of their divinest lake, he

[1] [For other references to the Cenacolo at Milan, see above, § 54, p. 103; and on Leonardo's dissipation of his energies, compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. Vol. XI. p. 71), and *A Joy for Ever*, § 21 (Vol. XVI. p. 30).]

[2] [For Ruskin's references to Luini, see above, Introduction, p. lxxii.]

[3] [The original paper adds "*, or that is accusable in any definite error.*"]

[4] [For Luini's birthplace, see *Lectures on Art*, § 73.]

Digitized by Google

is taught, without doubt or dismay, a lofty religious creed, and a sufficient law of life, and of its mechanical arts. Whether lessoned by Leonardo himself, or merely one of many, disciplined in the system of the Milanese school, he learns unerringly to draw, unerringly and enduringly to paint. His tasks are set him without question day by day, by men who are justly satisfied with his work, and who accept it without any harmful praise or senseless blame. Place, scale, and subject are determined for him on the cloister wall or the church dome; as he is required, and for sufficient daily bread, and little more,[1] he paints what he has been taught to design wisely, and has passion to realize gloriously: every touch he lays is eternal, every thought he conceives is beautiful and pure: his hand moves always in radiance of blessing; from day to day his life enlarges in power and peace; it passes away cloudlessly, the starry twilight remaining arched far against the night.

84. Oppose to such a life as this that of a great painter amidst the elements of modern English liberty.[2] Take the life of Turner, in whom the artistic energy and inherent love of beauty were at least as strong as in Luini: but, amidst the disorder and ghastliness of the lower streets of London, his instincts in early infancy were warped into toleration of evil, or even into delight in it. He gathers what he can of instruction by questioning and prying among half-informed masters; spells out some knowledge of classical fable; educates himself, by an admirable force, to the production of wildly majestic or pathetically tender and pure pictures, by which he cannot live. There is no one to judge them, or to command him: only some of the English upper classes hire him to paint their houses and parks, and destroy the drawings afterwards by the most wanton neglect. Tired of labouring carefully, without either reward or praise, he dashes out into various experimental

[1] [The original paper reads: " . . . is required for his sufficient daily bread, he paints . . ."]

[2] [Compare the contrast between Turner and Giorgione in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. ix., "The Two Boyhoods" (Vol. VII. p. 374).]

Digitized by Google

and popular works—makes himself the servant of the lower public, and is dragged hither and thither at their will; while yet, helpless and guideless, he indulges his idiosyncrasies till they change into insanities; the strength of his soul increasing its sufferings, and giving force to its errors; all the purpose of life degenerating into instinct; and the web of his work wrought, at last, of beauties too subtle to be understood, with vices too singular to be forgiven; all useless, because his[1] magnificent idiosyncrasy had become solitude, or contention, in the midst of a reckless populace, instead of submitting itself in loyal harmony to the Art-laws of an understanding nation. And the life passed away in darkness; and its final work, in all the best beauty of it, has already perished, only enough remaining to teach us what we have lost.

85. These are the opposite effects of Law and of Liberty on men of the highest powers. In the case of inferiors the contrast is still more fatal; under strict law, they become the subordinate workers in great schools, healthily aiding, echoing, or supplying, with multitudinous force of hand, the mind of the leading masters: they are the nameless carvers of great architecture—stainers of glass—hammerers of iron—helpful scholars, whose work ranks round, if not with, their master's, and never disgraces it. But the inferiors under a system of licence for the most part perish in miserable effort;* a few struggle into pernicious eminence

* As I correct this sheet for press, my *Pall Mall Gazette* of last Saturday, April 17th,[2] is lying on the table by me. I print a few lines out of it:—

"An Artist's Death.—A sad story was told at an inquest held in

[1] [The original paper reads: " . . . to be understood, mixed with vices . . . useless, just because the magnificent idiosyncracy had become one of solitude." The reprint in *Queen of the Air:* " . . . to be understood, his liberty, with vices . . . because magnificent idiosyncracy had become solitude." The text given above is in accordance with Ruskin's marking for revision in his copy of that work.]

[2] [1869. The note was added in that year, when Ruskin reprinted portions of the *Cestus of Aglaia* in *Queen of the Air*. The blanks at this interval of time may be filled up: "Isidore Magnes," "Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square," "M. Antonio van Bever."]

Digitized by Google

—harmful alike to themselves and to all who admire them; many die of starvation; many insane, either in weakness of insolent egotism, like Haydon,[1] or in a conscientious agony of beautiful purpose and warped power, like Blake. There is no probability of the persistence of a licentious school in any good accidentally discovered by them; there is an approximate certainty of their gathering, with acclaim, round any shadow of evil, and following it to whatever quarter of destruction it may lead.[2]

86. It was in the full persuasion of these facts, and of the consequent necessity of some statement of law for our schools, that I began these papers, hoping they might fall chiefly into the form of discussion. That in such a journal as this I should obtain no answer to so simple a question

St. Pancras last night by Dr. Lankester on the body of * * *, aged fifty-nine, a French artist, who was found dead in his bed at his rooms in * * * Street. M. * * *, also an artist, said he had known the deceased for fifteen years. He once held a high position, and being anxious to make a name in the world, he five years ago commenced a large picture, which he hoped, when completed, to have in the gallery at Versailles; and with that view he sent a photograph of it to the French Emperor. He also had an idea of sending it to the English Royal Academy. He laboured on this picture, neglecting other work which would have paid him well, and gradually sank lower and lower into poverty. His friends assisted him, but being absorbed in his great work, he did not heed their advice, and they left him. He was, however, assisted by the French Ambassador, and last Saturday he (the witness) saw deceased, who was much depressed in spirits, as he expected the brokers to be put in possession for rent. He said his troubles were so great that he feared his brain would give way. The witness gave him a shilling, for which he appeared very thankful. On Monday the witness called upon him, but received no answer to his knock. He went again on Tuesday, and entered the deceased's bedroom, and found him dead. Dr. George Ross said that when called in to the deceased he had been dead at least two days. The room was in a filthy, dirty condition, and the picture referred to—certainly a very fine one—was in that room. The post-mortem examination showed that the cause of death was fatty degeneration of the heart, the latter probably having ceased its action through the mental excitement of the deceased."

---

[1] [On Haydon, see Vol. VII. p. 231 *n.*; Vol. XII. pp. 124, 129, 130, 307; and Vol. XIV. p. 160. For Blake, see above, § 4, p. 56. The original paper reads "ignorant" for "beautiful."]

[2] [Here the passages reprinted in *Queen of the Air* end.]

Digitized by Google

as the first I asked, respecting the proper use of the black outline, is itself a fact of some significance. For the present I am tired of writing without help; and having stated, as far as I know them, the higher laws which bear on this elementary question, I leave it to such issue as my good editor and his artist readers care to bring it to, until January, when, if nothing hinder, I will again take it up where they leave it for me.[1]

[1] [See above, p. 70 and *n.*]

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII[1]

[THE LIMITS OF MATERIAL]

87. In recommencing this series of papers, I may perhaps take permission briefly to remind the reader of the special purpose which my desultory way of writing, (of so vast a subject I find it impossible to write otherwise than desultorily,) may cause him sometimes to lose sight of; the ascertainment, namely, of some laws for present practice of Art in our schools, which may be admitted, if not with absolute, at least with a sufficient consent, by leading artists.[2]

There are indeed many principles on which different men must ever be at variance; others, respecting which it may be impossible to obtain any practical consent in certain phases of particular schools. But there are a few, which, I think, in all times of meritorious Art, the leading painters would admit; and others which, by discussion, might be arrived at, as, at all events, the best discoverable for the time.

88. One of those which I suppose great workmen would always admit, is, that, whatever material we use, the virtues of that material are to be exhibited, and its defects frankly admitted; no effort being made to conquer those defects by such skill as may make the material resemble another.[3] For instance, in the dispute so frequently revived by the public, touching the relative merits of oil colour and water colour; I do not think a great painter would ever consider it a merit in a water colour to have the "force of oil."

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 9, 10. January 1866.]
[2] [Compare § 6; above, p. 57.]
[3] [On this subject compare *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. pp. 72–75), and *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 455, with the other passages there noted).]

Digitized by Google

He would like it to have the peculiar delicacy, paleness, and transparency belonging specially to its own material. On the other hand, I think he would not like an oil painting to have the deadness or paleness of a water colour. He would like it to have the deep shadows, and the rich glow, and crumbling and bossy touches which are alone attainable in oil colour. And if he painted in fresco, he would neither aim at the transparency of water colour, nor the richness of oil; but at luminous bloom of surface, and dignity of clearly visible form. I do not think that this principle would be disputed by artists of great power at any time, or in any country; though, if by mischance they had been compelled to work in one material, while desiring the qualities only attainable in another, they might strive, and meritoriously strive, for those better results, with what they had under their hand. The change of manner in William Hunt's work, in the later part of his life, was an example of this. As his art became more developed, he perceived in his subjects qualities which it was impossible to express in a transparent medium; and employed opaque white to draw with, when the finer forms of relieved light could not be otherwise followed. It was out of his power to do more than this, since in later life any attempt to learn the manipulation of oil colour would have been unadvisable; and he obtained results of singular beauty; though their preciousness and completion would never, in a well-founded school of Art, have been trusted to the frail substance of water colour.[1]

89. But although I do not suppose that the abstract principle of doing with each material what it is best fitted to do, would be, in terms, anywhere denied; the practical question is always, not what should be done with this, or that, if everything were in our power; but what can be, or ought to be, accomplished with the means at our disposal, and in the circumstances under which we must

[1] [For notes on another change of manner in Hunt's later work, see Vol. XIV. p. 383.]

Digitized by Google

necessarily work. Thus, in the question immediately before us, of the proper use of the black line—it is easy to establish the proper virtue of Line work, as essentially "De-Lineation," the expressing by outline the true limits of forms, which distinguish and part them from other forms; just as the virtue of brush work is essentially breadth, softness, and blending of forms. And, in the abstract, the point ought not to be used where the aim is not that of definition, nor the brush to be used where the aim is not that of breadth. Every painting in which the aim is primarily that of drawing, and every drawing in which the aim is primarily that of painting, must alike be in a measure erroneous. But it is one thing to determine what should be done with the black line, in a period of highly disciplined and widely practised art, and quite another thing to say what should be done with it, at this present time, in England. Especially, the increasing interest and usefulness of our illustrated books render this an inquiry of very great social and educational importance. On the one side, the skill and felicity of the work spent upon them, and the advantage which young readers, if not those of all ages, *might* derive from having examples of good drawing put familiarly before their eyes, cannot be overrated; yet, on the other side, neither the admirable skill nor free felicity of the work can ultimately be held a counterpoise for the want—if there be a want—of sterling excellence: while, farther, this increased power of obtaining examples of art for private possession, at an almost nominal price, has two accompanying evils: it prevents the proper use of what we have, by dividing the attention, and continually leading us restlessly to demand new subjects of interest, while the old are as yet not half exhausted; and it prevents us—satisfied with the multiplication of minor art in our own possession—from looking for a better satisfaction in great public works.

90. Observe, first, it prevents the proper use of what we have. I often endeavour, though with little success, to conceive what would have been the effect on my mind,

Digitized by Google

when I was a boy, of having such a book given me as Watson's "Illustrated Robinson Crusoe."* The edition I had was a small octavo one, in two volumes, printed at the Chiswick Press in 1812. It has, in each volume, eight or ten very rude vignettes, about a couple of inches wide; cut in the simple, but legitimate, manner of Bewick, and, though wholly commonplace and devoid of beauty, yet, as far as they go, rightly done; and here and there sufficiently suggestive of plain facts. I am quite unable to say how far I wasted,—how far I spent to advantage,—the unaccountable hours during which I pored over these woodcuts; receiving more real sensation of sympathetic terror from the drifting hair and fear-stricken face of Crusoe dashed against the rock, in the rude attempt at the representation of his escape from the wreck, than I can now from the highest art; though the rocks and water are alike cut only with a few twisted or curved lines, and there is not the slightest attempt at light and shade, or imitative resemblance. For one thing, I am quite sure that being forced to make all I could out of very little things, and to remain long contented with them, not only in great part formed the power of close analysis in my mind, and the habit of steady contemplation; but rendered the power of greater art over me, when I first saw it, as intense as that of magic; so that it appealed to me like a vision out of another world.[1]

91. On the other hand this long contentment with inferior work, and the consequent acute enjoyment of whatever was the least suggestive of truth in a higher degree,

* Routledge, 1864. The engraving is all by Dalziel.[2] I do not ask the reader's pardon for speaking of myself, with reference to the point at issue. It is perhaps quite as modest to relate personal experience as to offer personal opinion; and the accurate statement of such experience is, in questions of this sort, the only contribution at present possible towards their solution.

[1] [For Ruskin's early reading of *Robinson Crusoe*, see *Præterita*, i. § 1, and for his "monastic poverty" in the matter of elaborate toys, *ibid.*, § 13.]

[2] [Illustrated by J. D. Watson (of the Royal Water-Colour Society). For Ruskin's appreciation of the work of the brothers Dalziel, see below, p. 149.]

Digitized by Google

rendered me long careless of the highest virtues of execution, and retarded by many years the maturing and balancing of the general power of judgment. And I am now, as I said, quite unable to imagine what would have been the result upon me, of being enabled to study, instead of these coarse vignettes, such lovely and expressive work as that of Watson; suppose, for instance, the vignette at p. 87, which would have been sure to have caught my fancy, because of the dog, with its head on Crusoe's knee, looking up and trying to understand what is the matter with his master. It remains to be seen, and can only be known by experience, what will actually be the effect of these treasures on the minds of children that possess them. The result must be in some sort different from anything yet known; no such art was ever yet attainable by the youth of any nation. Yet of this there can, as I have just said, be no reasonable doubt;—that it is not well to make the imagination indolent, or take its work out of its hands by supplying continual pictures of what might be sufficiently conceived without pictures.

92. Take, for instance, the preceding vignette, in the same book, "Crusoe looking at the first shoots of barley." Nothing can be more natural or successful as a representation; but, after all, whatever the importance of the moment in Crusoe's history, the picture can show us nothing more than a man in a white shirt and dark pantaloons, in an attitude of surprise; and the imagination ought to be able to compass so much as this without help. And if so laborious aid be given, much more ought to be given. The virtue of Art, as of life, is that no line shall be in vain. Now the number of lines in this vignette, applied with full intention of thought in every touch, as they would have been by Holbein or Dürer, are quite enough to have produced,—not a merely deceptive dash of local colour, with evanescent background,—but an entirely perfect piece of chiaroscuro, with its lights all truly limited and gradated, and with every form of leaf and rock in the

Digitized by Google

background entirely right, complete,—and full not of mere suggestion, but of accurate information, exactly such as the fancy by itself cannot furnish. A work so treated by any man of power and sentiment such as the designer of this vignette possesses, would be an eternal thing; ten in the volume, for real enduring and educational power, were worth two hundred in imperfect development, and would have been a perpetual possession to the reader; whereas one certain result of the multiplication of these lovely but imperfect drawings, is to increase the feverish thirst for excitement, and to weaken the power of attention by endless diversion and division. This volume, beautiful as it is, will be forgotten; the strength in it is, in final outcome, spent for nought; and others, and still others, following it, will "come like shadows, so depart."[1]

98. There is, however, a quite different disadvantage, but no less grave, to be apprehended from this rich multiplication of private possession.[2] The more we have of books, and cabinet pictures, and cabinet ornaments, and other such domestic objects of art, the less capable we shall become of understanding or enjoying the lofty character of work noble in scale, and intended for public service. The most practical and immediate distinction between the orders of "mean" and "high" Art, is that the first is private,—the second public; the first for the individual, the second for all. It may be that domestic Art is the only kind which is likely to flourish in a country of cold climate, and in the hands of a nation tempered as the English are; but it is necessary that we should at least understand the disadvantage under which we thus labour; and the duty of not allowing the untowardness of our circumstances, or the selfishness of our dispositions, to have unresisted and unchecked influence over the adopted style of our art. But this part of the subject requires to be examined at length, and I must therefore reserve it for the following paper.

[1] [*Macbeth*, iv. 1, 111.]
[2] Compare *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 62 *seq.* (Vol. XVI. pp. 57–61).]

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII[1]

[PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ART]

94. In pursuing the question put at the close of the last paper, it must be observed that there are essentially two conditions under which we have to examine the difference between the effects of public and private Art on national prosperity.[2] The first in immediate influence is their Economical function, the second their Ethical. We have first to consider what class of persons they in each case support; and, secondly, what classes they teach or please.

Looking over the list of the gift-books of this year, perhaps the first circumstance which would naturally strike us would be the number of persons living by this industry; and, in any consideration of the probable effects of a transference of the public attention to other kinds of work, we ought first to contemplate the result on the interests of the workman. The guinea spent on one of our ordinary illustrated gift-books is divided among—

1. A number of second-rate or third-rate artists, producing designs as fast as they can, and realizing them up to the standard required by the public of that year. Men of consummate power may sometimes put their hands to the business; but exceptionally.
2. Engravers, trained to mechanical imitation of this second or third-rate work; of these engravers the inferior classes are usually much over-worked.

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 33–34. February 1866.]

[2] [On this subject compare *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 46 *seq.* (Vol. XII. pp. 68 *seq.*); *A Joy for Ever* (Vol. XVI.); and *Val d'Arno*, § 65. On the ethics of art patronage, see also *Lectures on Art*, §§ 7, 11, 12; *Ariadne Florentina*, § 140, and *Art of England*, § 195.]

Digitized by Google

3. Printers, paper-makers, ornamental binders, and other craftsmen.
4. Publishers and booksellers.

95. Let us suppose the book can be remuneratively produced if there is a sale of five thousand copies. Then £5,000, contributed for it by the public, are divided among the different workers; it does not matter what actual rate of division we assume, for the mere object of comparison with other modes of employing the money; but let us say these £5,000 are divided among five hundred persons, giving on an average £10 to each. And let us suppose these £10 to be a fortnight's maintenance to each. Then, to maintain them through the year, twenty-five such books must be published; or to keep certainly within the mark of the probable cost of our autumnal gift-books, suppose £100,000 are spent by the public, with resultant supply of 100,000 households with one illustrated book, of second or third-rate quality each (there being twenty different books thus supplied), and resultant maintenance of five hundred persons for the year, at severe work of a second or third-rate order, mostly mechanical.

96. Now, if the mind of the nation, instead of private, be set on public work, there is of course no expense incurred for multiplication, or mechanical copying of any kind, or for retail dealing. The £5,000, instead of being given for five thousand *copies* of the work, and divided among five hundred persons, are given for one original work, and given to one person. This one person will of course employ assistants; but these will be chosen by himself, and will form a superior class of men, out of whom the future leading artists of the time will rise in succession. The broad difference will therefore be, that, in the one case, £5,000 are divided among five hundred persons of different classes, doing second-rate or wholly mechanical work; and in the other case, the same sum is divided among a few chosen persons of the best material of mind producible by the state at the given epoch. It may seem

Digitized by Google

an unfair assumption that work for the public will be more honestly and earnestly done than that for private possession. But every motive that can touch either conscience or ambition is brought to bear upon the artist who is employed on a public service, and only a few such motives in other modes of occupation. The greater permanence, scale, dignity of office, and fuller display of Art in a National building, combine to call forth the energies of the artist; and if a man will not do his best under such circumstances, there is no "best" in him.

97. It might also at first seem an unwarrantable assumption that fewer persons would be employed in the private than in the national work, since, at least in architecture, quite as many subordinate craftsmen are employed as in the production of a book. It is, however, necessary, for the purpose of clearly seeing the effect of the two forms of occupation, that we should oppose them where their contrast is most complete; and that we should compare, not merely bookbinding with bricklaying, but the presentation of Art in books, necessarily involving much subordinate employment, with its presentation in statues or wall-pictures, involving only the labour of the artist and of his immediate assistants. In the one case, then, I repeat, the sum set aside by the public for Art-purposes is divided among many persons, very indiscriminately chosen; in the other among few, carefully chosen. But it does not, for that reason, support fewer persons. The few artists live on their larger incomes,* by expenditure among various tradesmen, who in no wise produce Art, but the means of pleasant life; so that the real economical question is, not how many men shall we maintain, but at what work shall they be kept?—shall they every one be set to produce Art for us, in which case they must all live poorly, and produce bad Art; or out of the whole number shall ten be chosen who

* It may be, they would not ask larger incomes in a time of highest national life; and that then the noble art would be far cheaper to the nation than the ignoble. But I speak of existing circumstances.

Digitized by Google

can and will produce noble Art; and shall the others be employed in providing the means of pleasant life for these chosen ten? Will you have, that is to say, four hundred and ninety tradesmen, butchers, carpet-weavers, carpenters, and the like, and ten fine artists, or will you, under the vain hope of finding, for each of them within your realm, "five hundred good as he,"[1] have your full complement of bad draughtsmen, and retail distributors of their bad work?

98. It will be seen in a moment that this is no question of economy merely; but, as all economical questions become, when set on their true foundation, a dilemma relating to modes of discipline and education. It is only one instance of the perpetually recurring offer to our choice—shall we have one man educated perfectly, and others trained only to serve him, or shall we have all educated equally ill?—Which, when the outcries of mere tyranny and pride-defiant on one side, and of mere envy and pride-concupiscent on the other, excited by the peril and promise of a changeful time, shall be a little abated, will be found to be, in brief terms, the one social question of the day.

Without attempting an answer which would lead us far from the business in hand, I pass to the Ethical part of the inquiry; to examine, namely, the effect of this cheaply diffused Art on the public mind.

99. The first great principle we have to hold by in dealing with the matter is, that the end of Art is NOT to *amuse;* and that all Art which proposes amusement as its end, or which is sought for that end, must be of an inferior, and is probably of a harmful, class.[2]

The end of Art is as serious as that of all other beautiful things—of the blue sky and the green grass, and the clouds and the dew. They are either useless, or they are of much deeper function than giving amusement.

[1] [*Chevy Chase*, line 240 (Percy's *Reliques*).]

[2] [Among the very numerous passages in which Ruskin enforces this point, reference may particularly be made to *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 26), and *Lectures on Art*, § 9.]

Digitized by Google

Whatever delight we take in them, be it less or more, is not the delight we take in play, or receive from momentary surprise. It might be a matter of some metaphysical difficulty to define the two kinds of pleasure, but it is perfectly easy for any of us to feel that there *is* generic difference between the delight we have in seeing a comedy and in watching a sunrise. Not but that there is a kind of Divina Commedia,—a dramatic change and power,—in all beautiful things: the joy of surprise and incident mingles in music, painting, architecture, and natural beauty itself, in an ennobled and enduring manner, with the perfectness of eternal hue and form. But whenever the desire of change becomes principal; whenever we care only for new tunes, and new pictures, and new scenes, all power of enjoying Nature or Art is so far perished from us: and a child's love of toys has taken its place. The continual advertisement of new music (as if novelty were its virtue) signifies, in the inner fact of it, that no one now cares for music. The continual desire for new exhibitions means that we do not care for pictures; the continual demand for new books means that nobody cares to read.

100. Not that it would necessarily, and at all times, mean this; for in a living school of Art there will always be an exceeding thirst for, and eager watching of, freshly-developed thought. But it specially and sternly means this, when the interest is merely in the novelty; and great work in our possession is forgotten, while mean work, because strange and of some personal interest, is annually made the subject of eager observation and discussion. As long as (for one of many instances of such neglect) two great pictures of Tintoret's lie rolled up in an outhouse at Venice,[1] all the exhibitions and schools in Europe mean nothing but promotion of costly commerce. Through that, we might indeed arrive at better things; but there is no proof, in the eager talk of the public about Art, that we

[1] [See above, "The Study of Architecture," § 8, p. 28.]

Digitized by Google

are arriving at them. Portraiture of the said public's many faces, and tickling of its twice as many eyes, by changeful phantasm, are all that the patron-multitudes of the present day in reality seek; and this may be supplied to them in multiplying excess for ever, yet no steps made to the formation of a school of Art now, or to the understanding of any that have hitherto existed.

101. It is the carrying of this annual Exhibition into the recesses of home which is especially to be dreaded in the multiplication of inferior Art for private possession. Public amusement or excitement may often be quite wholesomely sought, in gay spectacles or enthusiastic festivals; but we must be careful to the uttermost how we allow the desire for any kind of excitement to mingle among the peaceful continuities of home happiness. The one stern condition of that happiness is that our possessions should be no more than we can thoroughly use;[1] and that to this use they should be practically and continually put. Calculate the hours[2] which, during the possible duration of life, can, under the most favourable circumstances, be employed in reading, and the number of books which it is possible to read in that utmost space of time;—it will be soon seen what a limited library is all that we need, and how careful we ought to be in choosing its volumes.[3] Similarly, the time which most people have at their command for any observation of Art is not more than would be required for the just understanding of the works of one great master. How are we to estimate the futility of wasting this fragment of time on works from which nothing can be learned? For the only real pleasure, and the richest of all amusements, to be derived from either reading or looking, are in the steady progress of the mind and heart, which day by day are more deeply satisfied, and yet more divinely athirst.

[1] [Compare *Unto this Last*, § 62, and *Munera Pulveris*, § 37 (Vol. XVII. pp. 86, 168).]

[2] [Compare above, pp. 96–99.]

[3] [Compare p. 36, above; *A Joy for Ever*, § 65 (Vol. XVI. p. 59); and *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871, § 4 (Vol. XVIII. p. 56).]

Digitized by Google

102. As far as I know the homes of England of the present day, they show a grievous tendency to fall, in these important respects, into the two great classes of over-furnished and unfurnished:—of those in which the Greek marble in its niche, and the precious shelf-loads of the luxurious library, leave the inmates nevertheless dependent for all their true pastime on horse, gun, and croquet-ground;—and those in which Art, honoured only by the presence of a couple of engravings from Landseer, and literature, represented by a few magazines and annuals arranged in a star on the drawing-room table, are felt to be entirely foreign to the daily business of life, and entirely unnecessary to its domestic pleasures.

103. The introduction of furniture of Art into households of this latter class is now taking place rapidly; and, of course, by the usual system of the ingenious English practical mind, will take place under the general law of supply and demand; that is to say, that whatever a class of consumers, entirely unacquainted with the different qualities of the article they are buying, choose to ask for, will be duly supplied to them by the trade. I observe that this beautiful system is gradually extending lower and lower in education; and that children, like grown-up persons, are more and more able to obtain their toys without any reference to what is useful or useless, or right or wrong; but on the great horse-leech's law[1] of "demand and supply." And, indeed, I write these papers, knowing well how effectless all speculations on abstract proprieties or possibilities must be in the present ravening state of national desire for excitement; but the tracing of moral or of mathematical law brings its own quiet reward; though it may be, for the time, impossible to apply either to use.

The power of the new influences which have been brought to bear on the middle-class mind, with respect to Art, may be sufficiently seen in the great rise in the

[1] [Proverbs xxx. 15.]

Digitized by Google

price of pictures[1] which has taken place (principally during the last twenty years) owing to the interest occasioned by national exhibitions, coupled with facilities of carriage, stimulating the activity of dealers, and the collateral discovery by mercantile men that pictures are not a bad investment.

104. The following copy of a document in my own possession will give us a sufficiently accurate standard of Art-price at the date of it:—

"LONDON, *June 11th*, 1814.

"Received of Mr. Cooke the sum of twenty-two pounds ten shillings for three drawings, viz., Lyme, Land's End, and Poole.

"£22, 10s. "J. M. W. TURNER."[2]

It would be a very pleasant surprise to me if any *one* of these three (Southern Coast) drawings, for which the artist received seven guineas each (the odd nine shillings being, I suppose, for the great resource of tale-tellers about Turner —"coach-hire")[3] were now offered to me by any dealer for a hundred. The rise is somewhat greater in the instance of Turner than of any other unpopular* artist; but it is at least three hundred per cent. on all work by artists of established reputation, whether the public can themselves see

* I have never found more than two people (students excepted) in the room occupied by Turner's drawings at Kensington, and one of the two, if there *are* two, always looks as if he had got in by mistake.[4]

---

[1] [On this subject compare *Notes on Prout and Hunt* (Vol. XIV. p. 403), and *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 97–103 (Vol. XVI. pp. 82–88).]

[2] [For other documents referring to the same series of drawings see *Dilecta*, §§ 25, 26.]

[3] [On one occasion the purchaser of a picture is said to have handed Turner a cheque which did not satisfy the artist. "I have made it guineas, I believe?" said the purchaser; "it was to be guineas, was it not?" "Yes; the guineas are right enough," was the gruff return, "but I paid six shillings for the coach; and that's not down." So Thornbury relates (p. 297, 1877 edition). "Many stories," says the artist's old friend, G. Jones, R.A., "are told of Turner's parsimony and covetousness, but they are generally untrue; he was careful, and desired to accumulate; he acknowledged it, often added to the jokes against himself, and would say, with an arch expression of countenance, when congratulated on the successful sale of a picture, 'Yes, but there is the frame,' or 'the carriage'" (Robert Chignell's *Turner*, p. 42).]

[4] [See above, § 35, p. 88.]

Digitized by Google

anything in it, or not. A certain quantity of intelligent interest mixes, of course, with the mere fever of desire for novelty; and the excellent book illustrations, which are the special subjects of our inquiry, are peculiarly adapted to meet this; for there are at least twenty people who know a good engraving or woodcut, for one who knows a good picture. The best book illustrations fall into three main classes: fine line engravings (always grave in purpose), typically represented by Goodall's illustrations to Rogers's *Poems*;[1]—fine woodcuts, or etchings, grave in purpose, such as those by Dalziel, from Thomson and Gilbert;—and fine woodcuts, or etchings, for purpose of caricature, such as Leech's and Tenniel's, in *Punch*. Each of these have a possibly instructive power special to them, which we will endeavour severally to examine in the next chapter.

[1] [That is, the engravings by E. Goodall (1795–1870) of Turner's vignettes; for other references to this engraver, see Vol. II. pp. xlii.–xliii. *n.*; Vol. III. p. 300 *n.*; Vol. VI. p. 100. Among other books illustrated by Sir John Gilbert, R.A. (engraved by the brothers Dalziel), were Longfellow's *Miles Standish*, Shakespeare's Works, and *The Book of Job*. By engravings "by Dalziel from Thomson," Ruskin presumably refers to the illustrated edition of Thomson's *Seasons* published in 1859. For Leech, see Vol. XIV. pp. 332–334, the other passages there noted, and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 179. For Tenniel, see *Ariadne*, §§ 93, 179, and *Art of England*, §§ 136, 150–153. In 1862 the brothers Dalziel engraved a series of Birket Foster's drawings entitled *Pictures of English Landscape*. They sent a copy of the engravings to Ruskin, and received the following acknowledgment from him:—

"GENEVA, *August* 12, '62.

"GENTLEMEN,—I am much obliged by your having sent me those beautiful Proofs. They are superb specimens of the kind of Landscape which you have rendered deservedly popular, and very charming in every respect. I wish, however, you would devote some of your wonderful powers of execution to engraving Landscape which should be better than 'charming' and which would educate the public taste as well as meet it. These pieces, however, are peculiarly good of their class—rich, gracefully composed, exquisite book illustrations, and very precious as examples of wood illustration.

"Believe me, sincerely yours,
"J. RUSKIN.

"MESSRS. DALZIEL."

This letter is reprinted from p. 154 of *The Brothers Dalziel: a Record of Fifty Years Work*, 1901.]

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX[1]

[THE THREE KINDS OF ENGRAVING]

105. I PURPOSE in this chapter, as intimated in the last, to sketch briefly what I believe to be the real uses and powers of the three kinds of engraving, by black line; either for book illustration, or general public instruction by distribution of multiplied copies. After thus stating what seems to me the proper purpose of each kind of work, I may, perhaps, be able to trace some advisable limitations of its technical methods.

(I.) And first, of pure line engraving.

This is the only means by which entire refinement of intellectual representation can be given to the public. Photographs have an inimitable mechanical refinement,[2] and their legal evidence is of great use if you know how to cross-examine them. They are popularly supposed to be "true," and, at the worst, they are so, in the sense in which an echo is true to a conversation of which it omits the most important syllables and reduplicates the rest. But this truth of mere transcript has nothing to do with Art properly so called; and will never supersede it. Delicate art of design, or of selected truth, can only be presented to the general public by true line engraving. It will be enough for my purpose to instance three books in which its power has been sincerely used. I am more in fields than libraries, and have never cared to look much into book illustrations; there are, therefore, of course, numbers of well-illustrated works of which I know nothing: but the three I should myself name as typical of good use of the

[1] [*Art Journal*, N.S., vol. v. pp. 97–98. April 1866.]
[2] [See above, § 37, p. 89, on photography.]

Digitized by Google

method, are (i.) Rogers's *Poems*, (ii.) the Leipsic edition of Heyne's *Virgil* (1800), and (iii.) the great *Description de l'Egypte*.

106. The vignettes in the first named volumes (considering the *Italy* and *Poems* as one book) I believe to be as skilful and tender as any hand work, of the kind, ever done; they are also wholly free from affectation of overwrought fineness, on the one side, and from hasty or cheap expediencies on the other; and they were produced under the direction and influence of a gentleman and a scholar. Multitudes of works, imitative of these, and far more attractive, have been produced since; but none of any sterling quality: the good books were (I was told) a loss to their publisher, and the money spent since in the same manner has been wholly thrown away. Yet these volumes are enough to show what lovely service line engraving might be put upon, if the general taste were advanced enough to desire it. Their vignettes from Stothard, however conventional, show in the grace and tenderness of their living subjects how types of innocent beauty, as pure as Angelico's,[1] and far lovelier, might indeed be given from modern English life, to exalt the conception of youthful dignity and sweetness in every household. I know nothing among the phenomena of the present age more sorrowful than that the beauty of our youth should remain wholly unrepresented in Fine Art, because unfelt by ourselves; and that the only vestiges of a likeness to it should be in some of the more subtle passages of caricatures, popular (and justly popular) as much because they were the only attainable reflection of the prettiness, as because they were the only sympathising records of the humours, of English girls and boys. Of our oil portraits of them, in which their beauty is always conceived as consisting in a fixed simper—feet not more than two inches long, and accessory grounds, pony, and groom—our sentence need not be

[1] [For Stothard, as the English Fra Angelico, see Vol. V. p. 105, and Vol. X. p. 222.]

Digitized by Google

"*guarda e passa*,"[1] but "*passa*" only. Yet one oil picture has been painted, and so far as I know, one only, representing the deeper loveliness of English youth—the portraits of the three children of the Dean of Christ Church,[2] by the son of the great portrait painter, who has recorded whatever is tender and beautiful in the faces of the aged men of England, bequeathing, as it seems, the beauty of their children to the genius of his child.[3]

107. The second book which I named, Heyne's *Virgil*,[4] shows, though unequally and insufficiently, what might be done by line engraving to give vital image of classical design, and symbol of classical thought. It is profoundly to be regretted that none of these old and well-illustrated classics can be put frankly into the hands of youth; while all books lately published for general service, pretending to classical illustration, are, in point of Art, absolutely dead

[1] [*Inferno*, iii. 51; quoted also in Vol. XII. p. 123.]

[2] [The portrait of the three daughters of the late Dean Liddell was painted by Sir William Blake Richmond, R.A., then twenty-one years old, in 1864, and exhibited under the title of "The Sisters." A reproduction of it is given in *The Life and Work of Sir W. B. Richmond* (*The Christmas Art Annual*, 1902, p. 9). The artist has printed some reminiscences of Ruskin's reception of the picture: "In 1864 Mr. Ruskin became keenly interested in the work which I was then doing. I had painted two sons of Sir Henry Acland, my life-long friend. The picture greatly pleased the Master. In the same year I painted a portrait group of the three daughters of Dr. Liddell, Dean of Christ Church. The picture was exhibited, and I received from Mr. Ruskin what appeared to me an exaggerated eulogium on my performance, but in the letter a critical anachronism occurred which startled me and amused me at the same time. Here were three modern young ladies seated in a landscape accurately painted from nature, prettily dressed in a modern costume, and upon the details I had expended as much pains as I knew how, particularly I was careful to delineate the very pretty little shoes, with buckles, that the centre young lady wore upon her dainty feet. In the eulogistic letter to which I have referred, Mr. Ruskin wrote: 'My dear Willy, you have made one great mistake. The rest of your picture being so supremely beautiful, why in the name of the devil didn't you paint the damsel's feet instead of her shoes? Perugino would never have committed such a blunder'" ("Ruskin as I knew Him," in *St. George*, vol. v. p. 299). The artist goes on to quarrel with this criticism as perverse. He does not, however, say why it would be more out of date to be without shoes than without hats; nor can it be asserted that Ruskin was wrong in thinking that the feet would have been even prettier than the shoes.]

[3] [For Ruskin's friendship with George Richmond, R.A., and appreciation of his talent, see *Præterita*, ii. ch. ii., and Vol. XIV. pp. 18, 217.]

[4] [*P. Virgilius Maro Varietate Lectione et Perpetua Adnotatione Illustratus a Chr. Gottl. Heyne:* Lipsiæ, MDCCC. The vignette of the fountain of Arethusa is at vol. ii. p. 611. Ruskin again refers, in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 124 *n.*, to the vignettes in this book.]

Digitized by Google

and harmful rubbish. I cannot but think that the production of well-illustrated classics would at least leave free of money-scathe, and in great honour, any publisher who undertook it; and although schoolboys in general might not care for any such help, to one, here and there, it would make all the difference between loving his work and hating it. For myself, I am quite certain that a single vignette, like that of the fountain of Arethusa in Heyne, would have set me on an eager quest, which would have saved me years of sluggish and fruitless labour.

108. It is the more strange, and the more to be regretted, that no such worthy applications of line engraving are now made, because, merely to gratify a fantastic pride, works are often undertaken in which, for want of well-educated draughtsmen, the mechanical skill of the engraver has been wholly wasted, and nothing produced useful, except for common reference. In the great work published by the Dilettanti Society,[1] for instance, the engravers have been set to imitate, at endless cost of sickly fineness in dotted and hatched execution, drawings in which the light and shade is always forced and vulgar, if not utterly false. Constantly (as in the 37th plate of the first volume), waving hair casts a straight shadow, not only on the forehead, but even on the ripples of other curls emerging beneath it: while the publication of plate 41, as a representation of the most beautiful statue in the British Museum, may well arouse any artist's wonder what kind of "diletto" in antiquity it might be, from which the Society assumed its name.

109. The third book above named as a typical example of right work in line, the *Description de l'Egypte*, is one of the greatest monuments of calm human industry, honestly and delicately applied, which exist in the world.[2] The front

[1] [*Specimens of Antient Sculpture, Ægyptian, Etruscan, Greek, and Roman: Selected from Different Collections in Great Britain, by the Society of Dilettanti*, vol. i., 1809. Plate 37 is of a head of Niobe in Lord Yarborough's collection, Plate 41 a very poor rendering of the Townley Venus in the British Museum.]

[2] [This is a very elaborate publication by the Government of France: *Description*

Digitized by Google

of Rouen Cathedral, or the most richly-wrought illuminated missal, as pieces of resolute industry, are mere child's play compared to any group of the plates of natural history in this book. Of unemotional, but devotedly earnest and rigidly faithful labour, I know no other such example. The lithographs to Agassiz's "poissons fossiles"[1] are good in their kind, but it is a far lower and easier kind, and the popularly visible result is in larger proportion to the skill; whereas none but workmen can know the magnificent devotion of unpretending and observant toil, involved in even a single figure of an insect or a starfish on these unapproachable plates. Apply such skill to the simple presentation of the natural history of every English county, and make the books portable in size, and I cannot conceive any other book-gift to our youth so precious.

110. (II.) Wood-cutting[2] and etching for serious purpose.

The tendency of wood-cutting in England has been to imitate the fineness and manner of engraving. This is a false tendency; and so far as the productions obtained under its influence have been successful, they are to be considered only as an inferior kind of engraving, under the last head. But the real power of wood-cutting is, with little labour, to express in clear delineation the most impressive essential qualities of form and light and shade, in objects which owe their interest not to grace, but to power and character. It can never express beauty of the subtlest kind, and is not in any way available on a large scale; but used rightly, on its own ground, it is the *most purely intellectual* of all Art; sculpture, even of the highest order, being slightly sensual and imitative; while fine wood-cutting is entirely abstract,

de l'Égypte: ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte, pendant l'Expédition de l'Armée Française, nine folio volumes, 1809–1830; two of *Antiquités-Descriptions*; two of *Antiquités-Mémoires*; two, in three, of *État Moderne*; and two of *Histoire Naturelle*. The engravings amount to 894 separate Plates (exclusive of 36 delivered with the text), usually bound in nine or ten separate volumes, the collection being divided into the same classes as the text.]

[1] [Louis Agassiz: *Recherches sur les Poissons Fossiles*, five volumes, Neuchâtel, 1833–1843. For Ruskin's early study of the book, see *Præterita*, ii. § 62.]

[2] [For Ruskin's later discussion of methods and limitations in wood-cutting, see *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 77, 98 *seq.*]

Digitized by Google

thoughtful, and passionate. The best woodcuts that I know in the whole range of Art are those of Dürer's "Life of the Virgin";[1] after these come the other works of Dürer, slightly inferior from a more complex and wiry treatment of line. I have never seen any other work in wood deserving to be named with his; but the best vignettes of Bewick approach Dürer in execution of plumage, as nearly as a clown's work can approach a gentleman's.[2]

111. Some very brilliant execution on an inferior system —less false, however, than the modern English one—has been exhibited by the French; and if we accept its false conditions, nothing can surpass the cleverness of our own school of Dalziel, or even of the average wood-cutting in our daily journals, which, however, as aforesaid, is only to be reckoned an inferior method of engraving. These meet the demand of the imperfectly-educated public in every kind; and it would be absurd to urge any change in the method, as long as the public remain in the same stage of knowledge or temper. But, allowing for the time during which these illustrated papers have now been bringing whatever information and example of Art they could to the million, it seems likely that the said million will remain in the same stage of knowledge yet for some time. Perhaps the horse is an animal as antagonistic to Art in England, as he was in harmony with it in Greece; still, allowing for the general intelligence of the London bred lower classes, I was surprised by a paragraph in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, quoting the *Star*[3] of November 6th of last year, in its report upon the use made of illustrated papers by the omnibus stablemen,—to the following effect:—

"They are frequently employed in the omnibus-yards from five o'clock in the morning till twelve at night, so that a fair day's work for a 'horse-keeper' is about eighteen hours. For this enormous labour they receive

[1] [Compare Vol. XV. p. 380.]
[2] [For Bewick's rendering of plumage, see Vol. XV. p. 410, and *Art of England*, § 135; and for Bewick generally, see above, p. 77 *n.*]
[3] [*The Morning Star* (1856–1870).]

Digitized by Google

a guinea per week, which for them means seven, not six, days; though they do contrive to make Sunday an 'off-day' now and then. The ignorance of aught in the world save ''orses and 'buses' which prevails amongst these stablemen is almost incredible. A veteran horse-keeper, who had passed his days in an omnibus-yard, was once overheard praising the '*Lus-trated London News* with much enthusiasm, as the best periodical in London, 'leastways at the coffee-shop.' When pressed for the reason of his partiality, he confessed it was the 'pickshers' which delighted him. He amused himself during his meal-times by 'counting the images'!"

112. But for the classes among whom there is a real demand for educational art, it is highly singular that no systematic use has yet been made of wood-cutting on its own terms; and only here and there, even in the best books, is there an example of what might be done by it. The frontispieces to the two volumes of Mr. Birch's *Ancient Pottery and Porcelain*,[1] and such simpler cuts as that at p. 273 of the first volume, show what might be cheaply done for illustration of archaic classical work; two or three volumes of such cuts chosen from the best vases of European collections and illustrated by a short and trustworthy commentary, would be to any earnest schoolboy worth a whole library of common books. But his father can give him nothing of the kind—and if the father himself wish to study Greek Art, he must spend something like a hundred pounds to put himself in possession of any sufficiently illustrative books of reference. As to any use of such means for representing objects in the round, the plate of the head of Pallas facing p. 168 in the same volume sufficiently shows the hopelessness of setting the modern engraver to such service. Again, in a book like Smith's *Dictionary of Geography*,[2] the woodcuts of coins are at present useful only for comparison and reference. They are absolutely valueless as representations of the art of the coin.

[1] [*History of Ancient Pottery*, by Samuel Birch, F.S.A., 2 vols., 1858. The frontispieces are coloured plates from vases. The cut at p. 273 is a woodcut of a "Scene of water-drawing from a hydria in the British Museum."]

[2] [*A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*, edited by William Smith, LL.D., 1854–1857. The woodcuts of coins are rough outlines.]

Digitized by Google

118. Now, supposing that an educated scholar and draughtsman had drawn each of these blocks, and that they had been cut with as much average skill as that employed in the woodcuts of *Punch*, each of these vignettes of coins might have been an exquisite lesson, both of high Art treatment in the coin, and of beautiful black and white drawing in the representation; and this just as cheaply—nay, more cheaply—than the present common and useless drawing. The things necessary are indeed not small,—nothing less than well-educated intellect and feeling in the draughtsmen; but intellect and feeling, as I have often said before now,[1] are always to be had cheap if you go the right way about it—and they cannot otherwise be had for any price. There are quite brains enough, and there is quite sentiment enough, among the gentlemen of England to answer all the purposes of England: but if you so train your youths of the richer classes that they shall think it more gentlemanly to scrawl a figure on a bit of note-paper, to be presently rolled up to light a cigar with, than to draw one nobly and rightly for the seeing of all men;—and if you practically show your youths, of all classes, that they will be held gentlemen, for babbling with a simper in Sunday pulpits; or grinning through, not a horse's, but a hound's, collar, in Saturday journals:[2] or dirtily living on the public money in government non-offices: —but that they shall be held less than gentlemen for doing a man's work honestly with a man's right hand[3]—you will of course find that intellect and feeling cannot be had when you want them. But if you like to train some of your best youth into scholarly artists,—men of the temper of Leonardo, of Holbein, of Dürer, or of Velasquez, instead

[1] [See, for instance, *A Joy for Ever*, §§ 20, 21 (Vol. XVI. p. 30).]

[2] ["The grinning match is performed by two or more persons, each of them having his head thrust through a horse's collar" (Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, vol. iv. ch. iii. § 31). Ruskin substitutes a hound's collar, in reference presumably to the cynicism of some Saturday reviewers. In "government non-offices" he is thinking perhaps of Dickens's Circumlocution Office, and its art of "How not to do it."]

[3] [Compare Vol. XII. p. 343, and Vol. XVI. p. 98.]

Digitized by Google

of decomposing them into the early efflorescences and putrescences of idle clerks, sharp lawyers, soft curates, and rotten journalists,—you will find that you can always get a good line drawn when you need it, without paying large subscriptions to schools of Art.

114. (III.) This relation of social character to the possible supply of good Art is still more direct when we include in our survey the mass of illustration coming under the general head of dramatic caricature[1]—caricature, that is to say, involving right understanding of the true grotesque in human life; caricature of which the worth or harmfulness cannot be estimated, unless we can first somewhat answer the wide question, What is the meaning and worth of English laughter? I say, "of English laughter," because if you can well determine the value of that, you determine the value of the true laughter of all men—the English laugh being the purest and truest in the metal that can be minted. And indeed only Heaven can know what the country owes to it, on the lips of such men as Sydney Smith and Thomas Hood.[2] For indeed the true wit of all countries, but especially English wit (because the openest), must always be essentially on the side of truth—for the nature of wit is one with truth. Sentiment may be false—reasoning false—reverence false—love false,—everything false except wit; that *must* be true—and even if it is ever harmful, it is as divided against itself—a small truth undermining a mightier.

On the other hand, the spirit of levity, and habit of mockery, are among the chief instruments of final ruin both to individual and nations. I believe no business will ever be rightly done by a laughing Parliament: and that the public perception of vice or of folly which only finds expression in caricature, neither reforms the one, nor instructs

[1] [For other passages in which caricature is discussed, see Vol. VI. pp. 469–474; and Vol. XIV. pp. 490–491.]

[2] [For Ruskin's appreciation of Sydney Smith, see Vol. VII. p. 357 *n.*; for Hood, Vol. VI. p. 471, and the other passages there noted: see also Vol. XVIII. p. 79 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

the other. No man is fit for much, we know, "who has not a good laugh in him"[1]—but a sad wise valour is the only complexion for a leader; and if there was ever a time for laughing in this dark and hollow world, I do not think it is now. This is a wide subject, and I must follow it in another place;[2] for our present purpose, all that needs to be noted is that, for the expression of true humour, few and imperfect lines are often sufficient, and that in this direction lies the only opening for the serviceable presentation of amateur work to public notice.

115. I have said nothing of lithography, because, with the exception of Samuel Prout's sketches, no work of standard Art-value has ever been produced by it, nor can be: its opaque and gritty texture being wholly offensive to the eye of any well-trained artist. Its use in connection with colour is, of course, foreign to our present subject. Nor do I take any note of the various current patents for cheap modes of drawing, though they are sometimes to be thanked for rendering possible the publication of sketches like those of the pretty little *Voyage en Zigzag* ("how we spent the summer"[3]) published by Longmans—which are full of charming humour, character, and freshness of expression; and might have lost more by the reduction to the severe terms of wood-cutting than they do by the ragged interruptions of line which are an inevitable defect in nearly all these cheap processes. It will be enough, therefore, for all serious purpose, that we confine ourselves to the study of the black line, as produced in steel and wood; and I will endeavour in the next paper[4] to set down some of the technical laws belonging to each mode of its employment.

[1] [See Carlyle: *Sartor Resartus*, book i. ch. iv.]

[2] [See *Time and Tide* (written in the following year), § 19 (Vol. XVII. p. 335).]

[3] [*How we Spent the Summer; or, a Voyage en Zigzag*, 1864 (4th ed., 1871). The book, published anonymously, was by Miss L. Tuckett.]

[4] [The present paper was, however, the last: see the Introduction to Vol. XVIII. (p. xxxvi.).]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

IV

THE RELATION OF NATIONAL ETHICS TO NATIONAL ARTS

(1867)

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This lecture was reported briefly in the *Cambridge Chronicle,* May 25, 1867.

The greater part of § 1 was printed from the author's MS., with passages from the newspaper, in W. G. Collingwood's *Life and Work of John Ruskin,* 1893, vol. ii. pp. 75–77, and again in the one-volume edition of that book, 1900, pp. 240–241.

The lecture is now for the first time printed from the author's manuscript. Some passages in the MS. are struck through, probably as being marked for omission, on account of time, in delivery. The lecture is here given in its entirety, as written. Two passages, however, are missing: see § 24, p. 182; and § 32, p. 188.]

Digitized by Google

LECTURE

(SIR ROBERT REDE'S)

ON THE RELATION OF NATIONAL ETHICS TO NATIONAL ARTS

(*Delivered at the Senate House, Cambridge, Friday, May* 24, 1867.)

1. On entering on the duty to-day entrusted to me, I should hold it little respectful to my audience if I disturbed them by expressions of the diffidence which they know that I must feel in first speaking in this Senate House[1]—diffidence which might well have prevented me from accepting such duty, but ought not to interfere with my endeavour simply to fulfil it. Nevertheless, lest the direction which I have been led to give to my discourse, and the narrow limits within which I am compelled to confine the treatment of its subject may seem in any wise inconsistent with the purpose of the Founder of this Lecture[2]—or with the expectations of those by whose authority I am appointed to deliver it—let me at once say that I obeyed their command, not thinking myself able to teach any dogma in the philosophy of the arts which could be of new interest to the members of this University, but only that I might obtain the sanction of their audience for the enforcement upon other minds of the truth which, after thirty years spent in the study of art—not dishonestly, however feebly—is manifest to me as the clearest of all that I have learned, and

[1] [Ruskin's earlier lecture at Cambridge (1858) was given in the town, at the School of Art. For his visits to Cambridge, see Vol. IX. p. xlvii.; Vol. XIII. p. 430; Vol. XVI. pp. xx., xxxvi.–xxxvii.]

[2] [Sir Robert Rede (died 1519), Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas. He founded three public lectureships at Cambridge, the endowment being reorganised in 1858, when it was directed that one lecture should be delivered annually by a man of eminence in science or literature.]

Digitized by Google

urged upon me as the most vital of all I have to declare—namely, that the faculty for art is not one which we can separately cultivate, still less, in the exercise of it, a gift which can be learned by imitation or direction, but that in this faculty we are to hail a visible sign of national virtue; it springs from such virtue without fail or stint, and no artificial stimulus can produce anything but a semblance and mockery.

2. And it seems to me especially necessary to insist upon this truth at present, because, though there never was a time when more efforts were used to make known the principles of art, or to exhibit and communicate its invention, there never also was a time when so much was done for vanity, and so little for love—so much in petulant thirst for pleasure, or malignant greed of gain; so little with any true joy in the treasures of the past or any true sense of our debt to the future—that debt and pledge, under which we are bound to those who come after us, that, for the sake of their prosperity and their lineal pride, every work as well as every deed of our hands shall be in their memory honourable, and for their service enduring. I too sorrowfully repeat that I see little work done in this spirit, or in the faith that its own power must begin in the purging of the heart, out of whose abundance[1] lips speak and hands labour.

3. On such simple thesis, therefore, I will ask your leave to dwell to-day. It is only as having always endeavoured to give assurance of this that I was able to hear in happy pride the gracious words with which you yesterday admitted me to the mighty trust of fellowship in your ancient University,[2] and it is only as endeavouring to teach this that I hope in future to be of service among men, or desire to be remembered by them.

The proposition, then, which it will be my object to

[1] [Matthew xii. 34: compare below, § 33, pp. 188–189; and p. 209.]
[2] [The honorary degree of LL.D. had been conferred on Ruskin: see Introduction, above, p. xxvii.]

Digitized by Google

demonstrate in the present lecture, is that, all Art being the Formative or directing Action of a Spirit, whatever character the spirit itself has must be manifested in the Energy or Deed of it, and makes the deed itself Bad or Good.

A thing may be, in the abstract, well or ill done mechanically, but well or ill done artistically, only as the subject of character in energy.

4. But no brief definition will embrace the whole truth in this matter. In the most general English terms we must say, Good art is the Formative energy of a good spirit. Then, whatever special or subordinate meanings we agree to attach to the term good, in all meanings of it the same proposition is true that the character of the Being is also that of its act and energy. By vicious art is properly signified that which is produced by a vicious soul; a just and strong person cannot produce it; every deed and force proceeding from him must be noble, effective, and strong. Similarly, pure and right art is that which is produced by a just and intelligent person; a false or foolish person cannot produce it, he can only produce a semblance and effigy of it. But inasmuch as the being of man is mixed of good and evil inextricably, the art which it produces is inextricably mixed also; and the better part being not only obliged to work in companionship with, but in some sort to work down through, the evil, using it as its instrument, or being obscured by it as by a dark glass, a convincing demonstration of the real roots and causes of action becomes possible only to closest analysis. To show the machinery and involution of power against power for good and evil, all colossal, in the mind of one great artist, Correggio or Mantegna, or Leonardo, would alone take the time you can grant me for speaking.

5. You will be disposed at this point, however, to answer me and say, It is of course easy for you to define good art as the work of a good man. But we do not grant you the right to assume such a definition. You have to show what absolute Goodness is in the art, and then what absolute

Digitized by Google

Goodness is in the spirit; and then, if what you would say be true, you should be able to prove by example that one is the product of the other. Indeed this *is* the way I would deal with the matter if I had time, but for the practical end in view I must be content with briefest assertion, for your own after trial. There is, indeed, an absolute right and wrong in art (the doubt of these has been the chief cause of our failures and errors). There is right painting, and wrong painting; right music, and wrong music; right gesture, and wrong gesture. Keeping, for example, to the art most generally known, there is a kind of music which is balanced, reserved, constructive, inventive, complete, pure, and lovely. There is, on the other hand, a kind of music which is unsymmetrical, intemperate, unconstructive, unimaginative, incomplete, sensual, undelightful. Every one of the words by which I express these absolute merits and demerits attaches itself justly also to the quality of soul by which they are produced, and by which they are willingly received. To the order of mind from which they spring they are also acceptable, and the temper by which they have been produced they have also a tendency to reproduce. And this is the great practical truth which I desire to bring before you to-day. We cannot teach art as an abstract skill or power. It is the result of a certain ethical state in the nation, and at full period of the national growth that efflorescence of its ethical state will infallibly be produced: be it bad or good, we can no more teach nor shape it than we can streak our orchard blossom with strange colours or infuse into its fruit a juice it has not drawn out of the sap. And, farther, such seed of art as we sow, such also must we reap;[1] that which is born of lasciviousness begets lasciviousness, that which is shed from folly will spring up into folly, and that which is sown of truth bear fruit of truth, according to the ground it is cast on, some thirty-fold, some sixty, some an hundred.[2]

[1] [Galatians vi. 7.]
[2] [Matthew xiii. 8.]

Digitized by Google

6. It is therefore no matter of debate whether art shall be taught or what manner of it shall be enforced. If we can teach the palm to bear no clusters or graft the grape on the thorn, we may forbid to a fully developed spirit its creative labour, or artificially instruct a false one to make the products of its labour beautiful. Wherever the intellect of a people is perfectly roused, art must exist; and, when it exists, every failure in the beauty of it is the sure and proportioned sign of an ethical depravity. Nor is it either a question whether art be an important part of the human energy or not; small or great, it is a necessary part. Forgive me if I press to tediousness the similitude of vegetation. I do it not in the least by way of ornamenting what I am trying to say, but only because it is quite the clearest method of saying what I mean. Consider how futile it would be to dispute whether the petals of a plant or its leaves were less vital to it than its root. All these are necessary, the health of any one of these is to be reached only through the ethical health of the whole, and it is a sign of that health. You may judge by pith, by bark, by leaf, by root, by fruit. And you may exaggerate the pre-eminence of any or sacrifice any. You may have more foliage than there should be, or less; you may sacrifice flower to seed, or seed to blossom. So, in the man, it is futile to ask which is the most important of his energies—the active, the reflective, or the poetic; none of these can exist rightly without the rest; any of them may be sacrificed to the rest, but the true health of any one is a sign of the health of all, and can only be achieved from the root upwards. By the sacrifice of all for one, an intensity of achievement is obtainable; but absolute rightness, even in lower accomplishments, only by balance with the higher faculties, as the riding of Cœur de Lion or the Cid[1] would differ from that of a circus rider.

On the other hand, though the apparently greatest

[1] [For these types of chivalry, see Vol. V. p. 198; Vol. XI. p. 79; *Eagle's Nest*, § 240, for Cœur de Lion; and *Munera Pulveris*, § 35 (Vol. XVII. p. 166), for the Cid.]

Digitized by Google

achievements in philosophy have not been accomplished by athletes, the errors of all philosophy are traceable to its seclusion, and would have been prevented or purged by the mingling of practical energy.

Your true education is not to be in guiding branches, or protecting fruits, though that must be done diligently; but for all barrenness and disease there is but one medicine—"Let it alone this year also till I shall dig about it, and dung it."[1]

And thus it is true of all the arts from the least to the greatest that they spring from the whole humanity, and that their object is the whole humanity. You do not teach a man to run, that he may be a swift locomotive machine with two limbs, but that he may be a strong creature able to move swiftly or slowly as he ought. You do not teach him to talk that he may be an instrument of articulate noise: but that he may be a perfect being, capable of necessary speech to his fellow. Neither do you rightly teach a man to paint, that he may become a binocular camera for the transference of coloured spectra, but that he may be a perfect human creature capable of such command over form and colour as shall communicate truly his human knowledge and his human thoughts. Therefore whatever art, whatever thing we have to teach, we can only teach hopefully by having first a right conception of the whole humanity, compacted by that which every joint supplieth,[2] so that the special thing we desire of it or instil into it may minister truly in subordination to its growing up into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;[3] that is to say, into the humanity which belongs to men as Sons of God, and with respect to which it is commanded to them —"Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect."[4]

7. Nor let it be thought that I use these words as

[1] [Luke xiii. 8.]
[2] [Ephesians iv. 16.]
[3] [Ephesians iv. 16, 13.]
[4] [Matthew v. 48.]

Digitized by Google

involving reference to any particular aspect of religious faith. These, or words containing the same meaning, would, as you know, be received as true by the masters of philosophy of every nation under the whole heaven,[1] which ever approached the possible dignity of the human being. That possible worthiness never has been nor can be neared but by the attainment of this sense of likeness in us to God as a Father, and love and help given from God to us as His children; and practically and spiritually, if not in words, there is no true prayer of mortal lips, nor any such true act of mortal hands as in the essence and purpose of it means prayer, which does not begin itself with the cry, "Our Father which art in Heaven."

Now, therefore, I shall endeavour first to delineate what I believe the masters of ethics do without dispute accept for the type of a true humanity, and then we may perhaps ascertain what part in the system of it its formative and inventive powers occupy, and so finally deduce some practical suggestions as to the methods of instant dealing with them.

8. Now it is of course easy to throw together in a few words the group of attributes which moralists recognise as indisputably virtues—Purity and Courage, Industry and Meekness, Kindness and Sincerity, we all know to be beautiful and desirable, and to bring with them correlative peace and power. But we are apt to forget that the perfectness of all these is in the balance of them and scope. Courage is not a virtue when it is blind or phrenzied, but when it is provident and deliberate; kindness, not a virtue when it is unjust and reckless, but when it is measured and apportioned; justice, not a virtue when it is without purpose of pity, or when it is hardened by pride, but when it is humble and merciful. The human soul must have all these elements so blent that, as the notes in a harmony, each shall have respect to all the rest, and be altered from its common self by the operation of the rest; and it must

[1] [Deuteronomy ii. 25.]

Digitized by Google

possess these all μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς,[1] not as an animal possesses them naturally, and only comprehending in the range of its virtues the narrow circle of its own progeny or its own recognized protectors and friends, but in all the power and consciousness of human Reason steadfastly honoured, faithfully consulted, and, as a directress or restrainer of action, having respect to whatever man can see, or foresee or remember, from his point of space in the Universe of God.

9. You must let me pause for a moment on those familiar words of the Aristotelian definition of art—μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς. I suppose that the words as written meant little more than the reasoning power shown in adaptation of means to ends in special work. But we cannot better the words, only we ought to take them in their widest and highest meaning, and reflect what would be the character of a human spirit governed by true reason, or, if you like to say instead of μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς, ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, and translate "by the word of truth,"[2] in the practical employment of its virtues—governed, I say, by such reason or wisdom—its own communicated portion of the Logos, which was in the beginning, and without which nothing was made that was made;[3] the wisdom which in her work has respect to all the Laws, and in her aim to all the creatures of God, which in her perfect humility and her unselfish providence comprehends at once the feebleness of her hands and the infinitude of her sway; the omnipotence transmitted through her weakness which is allied to the whole heaven, and merciful to the whole earth.[4]

[1] [Aristotle: *Ethics*, vi. 4.]
[2] [2 Corinthians vi. 7.]
[3] [John i. 2, 3.]
[4] [The MS. as first written shows an additional passage here:—

"It is this comprehension of the exact place in which we are, and of the relation to God which means also the faithful knowledge of ourselves; and let any man once get that wholesomely, and it will be shown to him that in all the fire and earthquake of his former zeal the Lord was not in the fire, and that his vociferous proclamation of readiness for duty must sink into a still, small voice."

For the Bible references, see 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.]

Digitized by Google

10. This, then, I take for an ideal of an Ethical perfectness—a harmony, namely, of the virtues on which I need not severally dwell, being by all men recognized—this balanced harmony being energized under a true and reasonable acknowledgment of the place in which we stand, of the circumstances over which we may have control, of the relation of our powers to these and to other beings than ourselves, and of the divine laws which directly govern both us and them.

That is what I would define [as] the fulfilled ἦθος of a man. And then I say that every action proceeding from this ἦθος is good; that every material object framed by it will be good, and that the end of education is to get this ἦθος,[1] primarily knowing that out of it all art, all science, and all political action will spring pure, and that whatever is at present good in any of them, springs only from what portion of such ἦθος there may exist mixed in our evil.

11. And now let me range briefly, as I must, through the circle of the arts, that we may see how this supposed inherent ἦθος, or such portion of it as may exist in us, does verily make all its deeds and expressions good, from the highest to the lowest. Take first the art of language. Words proceeding from perfect ἦθος will be accurate and true, because such a spirit will only seek to find, or to speak the truth. They will be clear, because spoken patiently and compassionately; they will be powerful, because the deliberation and sympathy are habitual to the speaker; they will be made sweet in sound, and beautifully placed by his sense of melody and order.

12. There is no other virtue or art of language producible by art than these; but let me mark more deeply for an instant the significance of one of them. Language, I said, is only clear when it is sympathetic. You can in truth understand a man's word only by understanding him; your own word is also as of an unknown tongue to him

[1] [For education as an ethical process, see Vol. VII. p. 429; Vol. XVII. p. 232; and below, § 38, p. 193.]

Digitized by Google

unless he understands you. And it is this which makes the art of language, if any one is to be chosen separately from the rest, that which is fittest for the instrument of a gentleman's education. To teach the meaning of a word thoroughly is to teach the nature of the spirit that coined it, and the secret of language is the secret of Sympathy.[1] So that while every other art is in some form of it practicable by the insensitive, the art of language is possible only to the gentle. Observe, I always use the word gentle in its full Latin sense of Gentilis.[2]

13. I have said this will be so; but can it be shown that it is and has been so? Yes; doubtlessly. The principles of beautiful speech have all been fixed by sincere and kindly speech. On the laws which have been determined by sincerity, false speech, apparently beautiful, may afterwards be constructed; but all such utterance, whether oration or poetry, is not only without permanent power, but it is destructive of the principles it has usurped, and wholly injurious alike to speaker and hearer. So long as no words are uttered but in faithfulness, so long the art of language goes on exalting itself; as soon as it is shaped and chiselled on external principles, it falls into frivolity and perishes. This truth would have been long ago manifest, had it not been that in periods of very advanced academical science there is always a tendency to deny the sincerity of the first masters of language. Once learn to write gracefully in the manner of an ancient author, and we are apt to think that he also wrote in the manner of some one else; that his thoughts are borrowed, as ours, for the occasion, and that he led the way in art as we follow in play. But no noble nor right style was ever yet founded but out of a sincere heart, nor can any beauty arise in language which was not first in thought. The grace of Virgil is wholly sincere, it arises out of the temper which dwells so

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 19 (Vol. XVIII. p. 68).]

[2] [*i.e.*, "belonging to the same family or *gens*;" so that what Ruskin means is that like can only be known of like.]

Digitized by Google

tenderly on the stories of Lausus and Pallas;[1] the precision and restraint of Horace are sincere,[2] they are the natural language of a man of the world living a simple and wholesome life; the mystery of Pindar is sincere, it is caused by the crowding of vague conception into a mind occupied with visions of spiritual agents; the naïveté of Dante is sincere, it is the instinct of a mind sanctified by Love into eternal youth. There is nothing I have to say to-day which I am more anxious that my hearers, especially my younger hearers, should believe and remember always than this: no man is worth reading to form your style who does not mean what he says, nor was any great style originated but by some man who did mean what he said. Find out the founder of a great manner of speaking, and you have found the declarer of some sure facts, or sincere passions; and your whole method of reading will be thus sharpened, for being sure that your author really meant what he said, you will be much more careful to ascertain what it is that he means.

14. Keep this in your mind, especially respecting what will chiefly bear the aspect of fallacy to you in ancient writers—their graceful or imaginative references to their Gods. Don't think that the sweet song of the Nones of December,[3] "Faune, Nympharum," was written by Horace as a modern English gentleman would amuse himself with chime of a Latin verse in a walk through his plantations. It was a solemn expression of thankfulness and prayer for farther protection to a trusted silvan Deity.

Don't think that that promise of a kid to the fountain of Bandusia went unfulfilled,[4] or that the worship which kept Clitumnus[5] pure was no truer a feeling than our weak

[1] [*Æneid*, book x.]

[2] [See what Ruskin says of the sincerity and piety of Horace in *Val d'Arno*, §§ 218 *seq.*; and compare *Queen of the Air*, § 47 (below, p. 348).]

[3] [*Odes*, iii. 18, 1; for another reference to the ode, see Vol. XVII. p. xlviii.]

[4] [*Odes*, iii. 13; for another reference to the ode, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 88.]

[5] [The source of the Clitumnus received divine homage as Jupiter Clitumnus; for its purity, see Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 146.]

Digitized by Google

sentiment which would build an ornamental temple by a stream in our pleasure grounds, and presently pollute its waters into blackness that we might rent them for another hundred a year. Above all do not think that because you find in more elaborate song or realistic art a distinctly decorative and formative use of the mythic element, and the principal figures and spectra of the Gods change as it seems under the touch of the hands of an enchanter, or obey the plastic syllables of his lips, that therefore the magician has no faith in or reverence for the visions he has summoned. He could not have summoned them but by his faith; nor is it he that wilfully changes them, but they that express themselves tremulously through his human change, as far-off lights of heaven through terrestrial air.

15. And of yet greater importance is it deeply to know that every beauty possessed by the language of a nation is significant of the innermost laws of its being. Keep the temper of the people stern and manly; make their association grave, courteous, and for worthy objects; occupy them in just deeds; and their tongue must needs be a grand one. Nor is it possible, therefore—observe the necessary reflective action—that any tongue should be a noble one, of which the words are not so many trumpet calls to noble action. All great languages invariably utter great things and command them. They cannot be mimicked but by obedience, the breath of them is only inspiration when it is not vocal but vital, and you can only learn to speak as these men spoke by becoming what these men became.

16. I pass to the next greatest art, that of Music. And as in this the relative science is of the highest complexity and interest, I must at once clear the inquiry from such confusion as the introduction of questions relating to science instead of art would otherwise cause. To every art there is, of course, an attached positive science—to language, that of grammar; to music, that of sound; to painting, that of colour; and to architecture, that of dynamics. A right

Digitized by Google

ethical state is necessary to the following out of any of these sciences completely, but the connection between morality of temper and the power of ascertaining an abstract truth—such, for instance, as the relation of the pitch of notes to the length of the string—is not direct and constant, whereas the connection between morality of temper and right expression or creation in any of the arts is direct, the one being a function of the other. It is therefore quite possible for a bad man to be a good grammarian, but never a good writer; he may be a good scientific musician, never a good composer; he may be a dexterous disposer of colours, never a good painter; and an ingenious builder, but never a good architect.

17. The want of a right ethical state in the investigation of what I may perhaps be allowed to call the Art sciences, is, therefore, shown rather by a disturbance of the due relation between the art and its science, than by errors in the technical knowledge itself. The vanity and insensitiveness which make knowledge too prominent, or the indolence and want of self-command which shrink from the labour necessary to acquire it, are both forms of one and the same egotism, and continually disgrace an art which otherwise might have been admirable, by the insolent display, or the equally insolent defect, of disciplined skill. But I shall not confuse the immediate subject of our inquiry with any investigation of these modes of technical vice. I suppose in every case the artist to be well trained and duly informed; and so perfect a master of his science as not to be moved to the display of it by his vanity; and I confine myself wholly to the examination of the effect of his ethical state on the forms of production to which he will determine that such science is to be applied.

18. Now, Music rightly so called is the expression of the joy or grief of noble minds for noble causes. The last clause of the definition is almost redundant, for a noble mind does not truly rejoice or grieve but for a noble cause. Nevertheless, in its encounter with accidents of base evil

Digitized by Google

it is capable of an acute and mortifying pain which cannot be expressed by music; and in its attainment of the various lower forms of material good it may feel for a time great gladness or complacency, not properly expressible by music, so that I leave the second clause of the definition as in some sort necessary to its completeness. I say then that true music is the natural and necessary expression of a kingly, holy passion for a lofty cause; that, in proportion to the royalty and force of our personality, the nature and expression of its joy[1] or suffering becomes measured, chastened, calm, and capable of interpretation only by the majesty of ordered, beautiful, and worded sound. Exactly in proportion to the degree in which we become narrow in the cause and conception of our passions, incontinent in the utterance of them, feeble of perseverance in them, sullied or shameful in the indulgence of them, their expression by musical sound becomes broken, mean, fatuitous, and at last impossible; the measured waves of the air of heaven will not lend themselves to expression of ultimate vice, it must be for ever sunk into discordance or silence. And since, as before stated, every work of right art has a tendency to reproduce the ethical state which first developed it, this, which of all the arts is most directly ethical in origin, is also the most direct in power of discipline; the first, the simplest, the most effective of all instruments of moral instruction; while in the failure and betrayal of its functions, it becomes the subtlest aid of moral degradation.

19. I say failure rather than disease of function. For, strictly speaking, the distinction is not between good music and bad music, but between that which is and is not music. And so in all the other arts, strictly speaking, there

[1] [At this point a page of the MS. is missing, the MS. resuming at (§ 19) "I say failure, . . ." Ruskin having detached the page for use in *Queen of the Air*, § 42 (see below, p. 343). Compare also such passages in *Fors Clavigera* as those in Letters 9 and 83, where he says that "the great purpose of music is to say a thing that you mean deeply in the strongest and clearest possible way;" and that when it ministers to mockery, obscenity, or "artificial and luxurious sorrow," music fails of its function.]

Digitized by Google

is no such thing as bad sculpture or bad painting. There is only no sculpture and no painting. The distinction in the power of the spirit is indeed between ἀρετὴ and κακία, but the distinction in the result is only between τέχνη and ἀτεχνία. The distinction therefore between the natures of exalting and of corrupting music, which the Greeks mythically expressed by the contest between Apollo and Marsyas, and between the Muses and the Sirens,[1] does not depend so much on an actual difference in essence as on a different ethical subordination. In good music the pleasure received by the ear is wholly subordinate to the purpose of expression. In the triumphant psalm of Miriam, or in the lament of David over Saul,[2] the delight of the bodily sense in song, though at its highest pitch, must be conceived as wholly subordinate to the still higher ruling emotion; but when the emotion is lower, or more common, the bodily sense, though that is always degraded together with it, yet maintains a higher relative position, and the moment this bodily sense of pleasure leads, the music is base and corrupting. So long, therefore, as Pindar's expression, ἀναξιφόρμιγγες ὕμνοι,[3] is true—as long as the hymn leads and the chord obeys—the music so far forth is exalting, and the meaning of the strife of Apollo with the satyr lies principally in that you cannot say ἀναξιφόρμιγγες ὕμνοι; and that in the change from stringed to wind instrument lies essentially the abdication of its authority by the word and the assumption of it by the note. And the worst corruption of music in modern days is not in, as it might at first be supposed, the exaltation of a dangerous sentiment by faithful sound, as in the hymn of the Marseillaise,[4] but it is the idle and sensual seeking for pleasure in the sound

[1] [For Ruskin's interpretation in this sense of the myth of Marsyas, see *Queen of the Air*, § 41 (below, p. 343). For the legend of the Sirens challenging the Muses to a contest in singing, see the note on *Munera Pulveris*, § 90 (Vol. XVII. p. 212).]

[2] [Exodus xv.; 2 Samuel i.]

[3] [The first line of the second Olympic Ode: "Lords of the lute, my songs." Compare *Queen of the Air*, § 41 (below, p. 343).]

[4] [For references to the Marseillaise, see *Queen of the Air*, § 42 (below, p. 344); *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 43; *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 48–49; and *Præterita*, iii. § 79.]

Digitized by Google

only, without any true purpose of sentiment at all, and often without the slightest effort to discern the composer's intention, or understand the relation in a master's work between the syllable and the note. There is no harm but a real discipline in the purposeful expression of any sentiment which can be set to noble sound. But there is infinite harm in an idle and wanton catching of pleasant cadences with only foolish meaning in them, or none.

20. There is, however, a more subtle form of error in musical indulgence, which is that mythically expressed by the Greeks in the contest of the Sirens with the Muses, and with Orpheus,[1] and which is also in the mind of Plato through all the discussion respecting the two modes of harmony in the Laws.[2] And the same truth is also variously though obscurely delineated in the great myth of the necklace of Harmonia[3]—ὅρμος. Note the connection of the word with ὁρμάω, as well as with εἴρω,—indicating, I say, the error of indulgence when not merely the sound, but the emotion of music itself is sought for the sake of pleasure, and therefore wantonly and unnaturally excited, by the Sirens, who are Goddesses of Desire,[4] instead of by the Muses, who are Goddesses of Instruction. Thus many people imagine that when they are drawn by their delight in the higher forms of musical composition to withdraw themselves for a time from common life and solemnize their hearts by hearing sacred words beautifully sung, there is, at least in the degree in which their true sympathies may be excited, a gain to their moral character. Nay, many of

[1] [For the legend of Orpheus, see above, *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 13, p. 66.]

[2] [See the passage from *Laws*, ii. 700, translated in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 73.]

[3] [Cadmus, having been raised to the throne of Thebes, was presented by Zeus with Harmonia, the beautiful daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, for wife; and the king gave to her the famous necklace made by Hephæstus—which proved fatal to all who wore it. Ruskin interprets this by tracing the degradation of the severe harmony which joins men and builds states (compare the reference to the legend in "The Story of Arachne," § 32: "the first queen of the city was Harmony") to the licentious harmony which is a dissolute force. He finds support for this idea even in the word for necklace (ὅρμος), which is connected with εἴρω (to fasten), but also in another meaning (according to some lexicologists) with ὁρμάω (to be eagerly desirous).]

[4] [See, again, *Munera Pulveris*, § 90 (Vol. XVII. p. 211).]

Digitized by Google

them would probably assure us, and with perfect truth, that they distinctly felt themselves morally stronger and purer after such pleasure. But that greater strength of the soul, though actual and undeniable for the time, is a dearly purchased gain; it is just what the increase of strength by over-exciting stimulant is to the body, and the morbid and momentary increase of moral sentiment is necessarily followed by general dulness of the moral nerve. So far only, however, is this the case as we have compelled the religious emotion that it may be a servant to our pleasure. There are doubtless persons so lovely and constant of soul that their profane life is artificial to them, and the sacred one natural; whose thoughts are always at home when at their Father's feet, and whose pure lips are then purest when they utter His name. These, through their inmost being, are incapable of any false delight; to them every pulse of accidental passion joins with and deepens the steady current of their life. But between these and the common hunter after pleasure in pathetic sensation, for whom the strain of the cathedral organ is made an interlude to the music of the ballet that he may excite his palled sensation by the alternate taste of sacred and profane, there is an infinite range of gradually lowered faculty and sincerity, receiving in proportion to the abasement of its temper injury from what, to the highest, brings only good.

21. It is not a good thing for a weak and wicked person to be momentarily touched or charmed by sacred art. It is a deadly thing for them to indulge in the habitual enjoyment of it. The *Miserere* of the Sistine[1] sends every one home in a degree hardened, who did not come there to ask for mercy; and the daily chanted praise of the cathedral choir leaves every one who comes not to adore daily less

[1] [The singing of the *Miserere* in the Papal Chapel was in the times before 1870 a great attraction of Holy Week in Rome. "There is terrible fighting at the door of the Sistine Chapel, to hear the *Miserere*," says W. W. Story in his *Roba di Roma*, 1863, vol. i. p. 103; and see "H. M.'s" *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome*, 1897, p. 292. For Ruskin's own impressions of Church music at Rome, see Vol. I. p. 385.]

Digitized by Google

capable of adoration. And as it is with the religious feelings, so in all others capable of being expressed by sound. If you have them, and desire truly to utter them, music becomes the most perfect utterance; for it is only noble life which can be so expressed. Envy, avarice, malice, cannot be written in music, but loyalty can, and love; and righteous anger and faith, courage and compassion, pure childish cheerfulness, and childish peace; only in these delicate passions and in the earnest disciplines of life can we learn to enter into the chastened sweetness and the ordered perfectness of sound. What remnant of the faculty of pity, of justice, of spiritual joy or grief, there may be left in us, we may by such sounds exalt, if we desire truly to exalt them; but if we seek only the pleasure of the sense, then the music searches for the dregs of good in our spiritual being, and wrings them forth, and drinks them; and thus the modern opera, with its painted smiles and feverous tears, is only the modulated libation of the last drops of our debased blood into the dust.

22. I pass next to the formative arts of sculpture and painting, in both of which two great faculties are concerned, which, though quite as essential in music, are here more visible in function, so that I have delayed until now the indication of their place in the Ethical system: I mean Imagination and the love of Beauty. I have done my best to define the Imaginative Faculty in my written work,[1] and will not attempt farther to define it at present, except in the negative, but nevertheless quite accurate way, that it is the part of a designer's gift which no teaching can communicate.[2] Whatever you can teach, or show any other person how to do, or lay down any kind of scientific rule for, is not imagination. And being thus incommunicable, it is the most precious of all art gifts; it is the essential one which alone gives work intrinsic value, and the value of this literally is infinite. There is no price for it. And

[1] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 219).]
[2] [See above, p. 34, and compare Vol. XVI. pp. 158, 334.]

Digitized by Google

respecting this imagination there is a widely spread popular opinion, which, like many other popular opinions, is not only at variance with fact, but is at polar reverse with fact. It is thought that imagination is an inventor of pleasant falsehoods, whereas it is, on the contrary, the intensest discriminator of virtue and truth. It is the principal part of that σοφία which is truly the ἀρετὴ τέχνης, and its function is distinctively περὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἀληθεύειν; its power depends on the vastness of its archic knowledge, and that knowledge is always ἐπιστήμη τῶν τιμιωτάτων.[1]

28. And hence it follows—and this is one of the massive and foundational truths to which every faithful investigator of art principle will at last plough his way—that all imagination is moral, more purely and loftily moral in proportion to its strength, so that no imaginative work can be unvirtuous or unbeautiful; and high imaginative work is always in every other way helpful and divine. And although, like every other human faculty, this cardinal one is subject to certain conditions of disease, yet its own nature is so pure that any grossness of disease is soon mortal to it; and if by any mischance of fate it is originally given to a man who wilfully uses it unworthily, it soon perishes. When oppressed by adverse external circumstances, and forced against its will to contemplate vicious and base things, it always passes into a form of insanity—only some lower conditions of it, chiefly grotesque, are possible to savage nations or uneducated persons, among whom there are no honourable things for it to know, nor *principia* of things for it to reach—and various abortive and cretinous states of it arise out of the confused influences of vice and luxury on men in whom it has not strength enough to develop itself and shake them off; these morbid states of it are to healthy imagination what the visions of typhoid fever are to healthy memory, and may be instantly recognized by the haunting presence of frightful images,

[1] [Aristotle: *Ethics*, vi. 7. Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 112, and *Eagle's Nest*, §§ 19, 23.]

Digitized by Google

and especially by a ghastly delight in the contemplation of death.

24. Respecting the other faculty chiefly concerned in the formative arts, the love of beauty, I can also state only the simplest elements of its definition.

[Here three pages are missing from the MS. In reporting the lecture the *Cambridge Chronicle* (May 25, 1867) sums up the passage thus:—

"As to the other faculty essential to sculpture and painting, love of beauty, this is not exclusive like the faculty of imagination, but is more or less the possession of all whose nature has a healthy tone, whilst it is the direct adversary of everything that is associated with cruelty, injustice, worldly greed, etc., and so varies in different men. In proportion to man's human love will be his love of beauty, and it will correspond to his previous ethical condition." Ruskin probably used the pages in *Lectures on Art*, §§ 91, 92.]

These two following laws only—which are indeed constant and sure, and which I doubt not you will willingly admit to be so—I will state, for such narrow completion of the subject as may be at present within my reach.

25. First, that the extent of possible conception of Deity by any man depends on his own pre-existent ethical state. You cannot teach the unloving that God is Love, nor the unjust that He is Righteous, nor the fool that He is Wise, nor the impure that He is Holy. All these names of His attributes have only meaning to us, if our own natures are capable of the quality they signify; it is only by magnifying what we have felt in ourselves that we attain imagination of a spiritual Being greater than ourselves; to the savage fierce from feasts of blood his Deity can only appear as a convulsed monster yawning for prey; to the tenderly nurtured and loving child he appears as a Loving Father. According to the degree in which He grants to His creatures to become like Him is the clearness with which He permits them to see Him as He is, and it is only to the highest and most disciplined states of human intellect and feeling that He at last reveals Himself; and even of that Appearance, what can we deem but that it is as a Shadow to us who are shadows, as a Personal Power shaping and

Digitized by Google

animating all things? Glorious in Holiness, as conquering Death, and putting strength into dust. Fearful in praises—as so exhaustless, so exquisite, and so inexorable in working—that all Praise of Him must, or understanding must, also be a form of Terror; and Doing Wonders—that is to say, so infinite in range of purpose, ever to us visible; so infinite in the fantasy and fitness of means for their accomplishment; so consummate in the expression of tranquillity over all abiding for ever, that His name must be to us always, Wonderful, Counsellor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, of the increase of whose government and peace shall be no end.[1]

26. Of whose Government and *Peace*. I must rest upon the word. For the second Great Law which we must recognize as inexorable, is that whatever imperfect state of knowledge of God may be granted to the imperfectly constituted soul—a narrow truth, stamped upon narrow being—it can only grow up into a higher truth so long as it is held and acted upon in the peace of a simple, unselfish, and laborious life. There is not any so mysterious or dreadful a part of the history of men as the corruption of religious faiths sincerely held by the vain agonies and vain pleasures of selfish purpose. We do wrong for the most part in accusing men of hypocrisy; they are nearly always deceived themselves more than they deceive others; and then the very strength of their faith communicates itself in some dreadful way to their vices, gives consistency to their ambition, cloak to their covetousness, and liberty even to their lust; for, dark and mysterious as the history of the Dionysiac element is in the pre-Christian ages, it is yet more terrible to see it maintain itself in openness side by side with the imaginations of baptised faith, colouring the page of the psalter with a border of demoniacal and indecent phrenzy,[2] lurking beneath the foliage and flowers of the

[1] [Isaiah ix. 6, 7.]
[2] [See above, pp. 100 and 102, and below, p. 365.]

Digitized by Google

temple gate, and at last prevailing over accomplished art till the Madonna and the Magdalen are blended together in the undisguised seeking for sensual beauty;[1] and thenceforward the enchantment of Christian art sinks into a foul sorcery, and is struck blind at last with the blindness of Elymas,[2] and goes about seeking some one to lead it by the hand, because it had not understood nor obeyed the word of the great promise of vision: *μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.*[3]

27. In briefest recapitulation, then, the elements of character necessary for the production of true formative art will be, first, brightness of physical life, and the manly virtues belonging to it; then the broad scope of reflection and purpose; then the distinctive gift of imagination; the innocent perception of beauty; to crown all, the perfect peace of an honest and living faith. All this is needed in the nature of the artist himself; and yet it is not enough. Endowed with all these attributes, or at least capable of them, he may still be made helpless by the lower condition of persons and things around him. For it is necessary to his healthy energy that his subject should always be greater than himself. He must not stoop to it, but be exalted by it, and paint it with full strain of his force looking upward. It is fatal to his strength, to his honour, if he is always raising mean things and gilding defiled. He has always the privilege, is often under the necessity, of modifying, or choosing, or contracting his subject, within assigned limitations of manners; but he must always feel that the whole, out of which he has chosen, could he have rendered it, was greater and more beautiful than the part he chose, and that the free fact was greater than his formalism. And therefore it is necessary that the living men round him should be in an ethical state harmonious with his own, and that there should be no continual discord nor dishonour standing

[1] [See Vol. IV. p. 365.]
[2] [Acts xiii. 8.]
[3] [Matthew v. 8.]

Digitized by Google

between him and the external world. And thus a lovely and ordered unity of civil life is necessary to fulfil the power of the men who are raised above its level; such unity of life as expresses itself palpably and always in the states capable of formative design by their consenting adaptation of a common style of architecture for their buildings, and of more or less fixed standards of form in domestic furniture and in dress.

28. The art of dress itself must not be omitted from our review, for being that of the whole people, it is of all the most closely expressive of its ethical state.[1] Imagine a society of persons healthy in body, reserved and gentle in temper, habitually dignified and graceful in gesture, desiring no conspicuousness which they may not deserve more honourably than by splendours of dress nor any concealment of their position in life, if a humble one, yet having, whatever their position, such self-respect as shall enable them to wear any dress, even the most splendid, without feeling shamed by it. Suppose, farther, that they are sensitive to the subtlest gradations of line and arrangements of hue, and that they are in the habit of living much in the open air and associating affectionately with each other, none desiring to outvie the rest nor refusing the care and time necessary to make their own dress as beautiful as the rest desire. Suppose, farther, that a general sense of propriety and of wise economy governs and restrains the love of splendour, that lives habitually industrious and brave necessitate simplicity of ordinary dress, and dictate such laws as may best preserve the accepted conditions of it from useless innovation. From these ethical states of the national temper a beautiful art of dress will infallibly develop itself; and whatever beauty there is in the dress of any nation at a given period, arises from the partial operation of such virtues in the mind of the persons who set its fashion.

[1] [Compare Vol. VII. p. 428; Vol. XVI. p. 48 *n.*; and Vol. XVIII. p. 40 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

29. We have now passed in brief review the certain compass of the mental conditions required in a people before it can become capable of noble formative energy. It is an employment of deep speculative interest, to which I must leave you at your pleasure, to trace the evidence of such ethical character, however disturbed or interrupted, in the nature of every race which has produced any immortal art. But it is not matter of speculative interest, but of imminent need and duty, if we wish to direct the labour of our own hands to be serviceable wisely, that we should compare the mental states under which alone it can become of value, with those which we find dominant in ourselves and in neighbouring nations.

30. Unhappily it needs little penetration to detect by certain conclusive signs what the general ἦθος is of every separate body into which the force of European national life is now divided. The ἦθος of the aristocracy of Europe is such that, in every senate, the measures brought under discussion are examined primarily not on their own merits, but with respect to the acquisition or retention of political power in the abstract, and without any, even the most distant, reference to any good to be accomplished by it. And it would be held strange in the most honourable of our assemblies that a man should vote for a measure distinctly and sweepingly adverse to his own interests, or to those of his party, on conscientious grounds.

The ἦθος of the commercial body of European gentlemen is such that they have laid down a code of economical science, founded on the theory that every man will act exclusively for his own interest.[1] The ἦθος of the tradesmen of Europe is such that they fully and heartily believe it impossible for any entirely honest person to live by his business. And the ἦθος of the populace of Europe is such that they will supply soldiers, or submit to taxes, for any war of which the object is distinctly acquisitive,[2] so that, in fact,

[1] [See *Unto this Last*, Vol. XVII. pp. 25, 104 *n.*]
[2] [See *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. p. 480.]

Digitized by Google

being nothing else than large troops of adverse banditti, they are compelled to live in a state of costly armament of reciprocal defiance.

31. I do not know, gentlemen, what moral rank the masters of philosophy in our own Universities would pronounce persons in these various mental conditions to have attained. But this in my own province I know too well, that men thus minded are capable of no production or acceptance of art deserving the name. That which we possess is either an entirely dead and unintelligent reproduction of past forms of it; or it is a base application of mechanical ingenuities to sensual indulgences; or it is the blighted and unnourishing fruit of a fragmentary and isolated virtue parched by the pestilence—vain fruit, whereof the Mower filleth not his hand,[1] nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom. I know that you cannot but at first feel or suspect this to be a bitter and exaggerated condemnation of the art which surrounds you with so much bright activity and daily pleasantness, nor can I justify my statement now, though I hope, or rather I fear, to be able to do so wholly in the lecture supplemental to this which I have soon to give in London.[2] But if you will consider how much of what we do is directly borrowed or imitated; how much of what we change is caricatured or debased; how much of what we believe to be our own we confess to be inferior to the work of the men of the past ages, though produced under scientific advantages which are to theirs as the noon to the dawn—you cannot but feel how much ground there is for humiliation, and how little clue for the direction of hopeful effort.

32. And even that slight clue we have quitted. There is an impression on the public mind that in order to recover national power in art, some knowledge of its practice should be diffused through the mass of the people.

Now what is really wanted is very nearly the reverse

[1] [Psalms cxxix. 7.]
[2] [See the next lecture in this volume.]

Digitized by Google

of this. It is not to teach the body of the nation to know something of art, but to teach the artists of the nation to know much of other things. It is not to give a *painter's* education to the populace, but to give a *gentleman's* education to the painter.[1] We have seen that by an artist or painter I mean a person who has the special gift for creative work rooted in affectionateness, in love of justice, and in power of imagination. We must no longer permit the kindest, truest, and most inventive minds in the nation to be the worst educated; and while by their peculiar constitution they are impelled to devote themselves to the finer kinds of manual labour, we must endeavour by the strictest training to inform and influence them with the thoughts which that labour may most usefully express. To understand that the artist is one of the principal officers of public instruction, and to prepare our youth reverently for entrance into the church of painters, as we now prepare them for entrance [into the church of priests], is the first step to the making of art itself [a means of popular education. Then there should be National Museums of Art giving] authoritative presentation to the people of examples of good work and authoritative instruction in the indisputable methods of it. . . .[2]

33. But of these temporary and external remedies I shall speak at length in another place; let me say only here, I hope in the deepest reverence, a few closing words, first to the pupil and then to the master, respecting that which is indeed the only worthy object of the effort of both, the kindling of the inner virtue, of which all true art is the emanation and all true science the instinct; and the purging, with refiner's fire,[3] the heart, out of whose abundance

[1] [See the opening of the lecture on "The School of Florence" in Vol. XX.; and compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 28 (Vol. XVI. p. 35); *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 4 (above, p. 54); and *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 1, 226.]

[2] [Two sheets of the MS. are missing at this point, and the last few lines of § 32 are here conjecturally altered and filled up. The missing sheets were obviously incorporated in the next lecture (see pp. 219 *seq.* and p. 229 *n.*]

[3] [Malachi iii. 2; and for the following Biblical reference, see above, § 2, p. 164.]

Digitized by Google

lips must speak and hands labour hereafter for ever. To my younger hearers I would desire to mark two forms of trial to which at this time they are in an unprecedented manner exposed. The first and deadliest of these, peculiar to your youth, is the contention of opinions round you, and collateral uprising of questions within your own hearts, respecting the nature of your relations to God, and questions which some of you may waste life in endeavouring to solve, and which others of you—perhaps too many—evade by carelessness of temper. Earnestly against the waste, and yet more earnestly against the carelessness, let me warn you.

84. All such questions are resolvable in the outset into decision between two alternatives, neither of which may be met with lightness of heart.[1] Either you are entering into a life which, however confused and shadowy now, must increase as day follows day into the light of an immortal and irrevocable fate, towards which every tread of your foot is an approach, and for which every act of your hands is a preparation; or else you are born but for a moment into this miracle of an universe, and allowed for a moment the breathing of its air and the sense of its splendour. For a brief astonished pause you may look up to the planets and see them roll, and to the clouds and see them float. You may hear the sound of the sea, and touch the garments of the Earth. The spirit of you expands out of the darkness, like the sheet-lightning of the summer twilight. And all this is with you. It closes, and all this was and is not. One of these alternatives must, I repeat, be true, and if you are men you cannot encounter either of them with a smile, nor steel yourselves by mockery against the hour which must bring you either face to face with Death, or face to face with God. But this you know, that whether you have to prepare for inexorable judgment or for endless darkness, and for one you must, the deeds and methods of life which you will be able joyfully to look back upon

[1] [Compare the author's Introduction to *Crown of Wild Olive,* Vol. XVIII. p. 394.]

Digitized by Google

must be the same, and that of these glittering days of yours, numbered or numberless, no ray should fade that has not seen some strain to scatter the evil and confirm the good and grace in your souls; that so the light of them may at last endure either in the sight of angels, or memory-assisted strength of men. Therefore, finally, whatever your fate is to be, don't jest with it.

35. I reserved for this place, separated from all others, the statement of the fatallest sign among the evidences of our present state of declining virtue, our increasing habit of jesting with circumstances of horror and death. When a nation is pure the aspects of futurity and judgment are always beheld by it with an almost childlike gentleness and earnestness—childlike, inasmuch as in the strong sense of present joy the fear of death seems taken away, while yet the truths of it, and of all that it may involve, are continually made matter of contemplation in solemn painting and solemn song. But when a nation is frivolous and base, it dares not raise its eyes simply to the shade of the horizon, but denies Death, and makes light of Him and of His invitation, going one to his farm, another to his merchandise; and then Death follows us fiercely to the highways and hedges, and compels men to come in[1] to feast with him while they are yet living, with shrouds for their wedding garments.[2]

36. Then the second trial which you have beyond all former extremity to bear, is the temptation to dispeace and tormenting strain of ambition, provoked by the manifold opportunity and approved by the, in this only not incoherent, clamour of an unhappy age, whose hope is only in change, whose satisfaction is for ever removed to what it has not, and whose pride is to be promoted to what it hitherto is not. You can hardly contend with this fatal impulse and possess your own souls in patience, unless you be deeply impressed with this primal truth, that it is not for

[1] [Luke xiv. 23.]
[2] [Compare the following lecture on "Modern Art," §§ 18–20, pp. 212–213.]

Digitized by Google

you to determine what you are or what you shall be. No effort of yours can add one cubit to your stature,[1] mental or bodily. From the womb, your Maker knew and sealed you, separated you to your place, and gave you your measured power. What you are born and bound to do, and what only you can in truth do, is, knowing both and using them, to take that place and develop within its proper limits that given quantity of special power.

87. If you try to exceed the limits of that appointed strength, you may indeed appear to have prevailed against them all your life long, both to yourself and others, but you are in truth only a puffed-up and bloated creature, for the most part venomously, at the best painfully and perilously, for yourselves and all who trust you. You may indeed by mortgage of the futurity of life give sudden force to its presence, and purchase the crown of instant victory with the despised silver of the crown of your grey hairs, but, mark you, to overpass your limits that way, you must lose eventually more than you gain; you pay compound interest for the advanced wealth, and are in the end, in the casting up and sum of you, found wanting.[2] But this is still the least important part of the question for you. By sharp effort, by vanity, or by cultivating unduly qualities of which others can quickly judge, at the cost of those of which they cannot judge, you may obtain outward position and estimate throughout life entirely above your deserving. Nay, most men would think themselves fortunate in any artifice which procured them such estimate, and in any fortune which gave them, as we say, an opportunity of distinguishing themselves. But, young students, remember, no distinction can be really fortunate to you, except that of being known to others, as to yourselves, precisely for what you are. Greater honour than that is either disquietude, or labour and sorrow, or some form of death. It is a fatal light, which falls on you more than you deserve, as the light on a feeble picture,

[1] [Matthew vi. 27.]
[2] [Daniel v. 27.]

Digitized by Google

beneath which the colours perish; nay, there is much noble light within you which is as the colours of a photograph, and would wither in the immodesty that displayed it. And all these considerations are yet only the selfish ones. Do I need to warn you against the shame of the consciousness that your petulant and unblessed success must have overshadowed the deserving, and repressed the usefulness of better men than yourselves, and added treachery to imposture? How much happier, how much greater, to keep your place and rank in reverent calm of mind, and to be able to in all time echo the words of the great Soldier,[1] saying fearlessly to others, and proudly in your own hearts, Not tossed up by the spume of fortune, not drifted at the will of the multitude, not by the mischance of competitors, not by the *Dis*grace of others or by my own, but by the Grace of God, I am that I am.

88. And now, last of all, in the most earnest respect let me pray you, the masters of this ancient, majestic, and over the earth hitherto pre-eminent school of human science and thought, to bear with me in patience while I speak a few words which are forced from me by utter sorrow of spirit. For seven past years[2] I have spent what poor life and strength was in me in the effort to declare to whosoever would hear me that all productive prosperity in this Christian nation depended on literal obedience to the command of the Founder of its Faith: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."[3] And every assertion of this truth, whether by my lips or those of any other man, has been invariably met with hissing and derision; so that it cannot but appear to me as if every class of the English nation was at present left by their teachers in ignorance of the nature of the

[1] [St. Paul: "a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy ii. 3); "by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Corinthians xv. 10).]

[2] [That is, from 1860, when *Unto this Last* was written, to the date of the present lecture, 1867.]

[3] [Matthew vi. 33; compare *Unto this Last*, § 44 *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 59), and *Val d'Arno*, § 272.]

Digitized by Google

Kingdom for which they are yet taught mechanically to pray from their cradles to their graves, and of the nature of that Justice of which it is promised that the Famine shall be filled, and the thirst quenched with blessing.[1] While the whole strength of the thoughts of the heathen age after age was bent on the interpretation of the sacred name of Justice, we do not so much as recognise it while we read; and while the childlike astronomy of five hundred years ago[2] read faithfully in the flames of heaven this golden Legend, "Diligite Justitiam qui judicatis terram," we, with the accomplished science of our manhood, do but trace the paths of lessonless or unintelligible stars, nor is any telescope ever raised to resolve the nebula that encompasses the word δικαιοσυνή.

39. Nor indeed is any such interpretation possible unless all our knowledge as well as all our possessions be held in subordination first to the law of holy life, and unless we make it the question of ordeal in our schools of youth not what they know, but what they Become.[3] Nor let it be believed, as it has been believed too easily, that it is in our power to impart the knowledge but not to enforce the habit. Partly in a manly modesty which hates all formal profession of conduct—partly in a manly pride, which early asks to be put upon its trial—it has become the instinct of the English people to look to their universities, not for the education, but the probation of their sons; to dread interference with freedom more than error, and formation of imposed virtue more than sin. But both these fears, just in their origin, become most unwise in their exaggeration; most unwise when they lead us to doubt the possibility of an ethical discipline both in our schools and colleges which shall temper and strengthen the heart of youth before there is yet need to prove it, and in the proof itself have respect

[1] [See Matthew v. 6.]
[2] [The reference is to the words which the souls trace in heaven in Dante's *Paradiso* (xviii.): see *Unto this Last*, § 46 (Vol. XVII. p. 62).]
[3] [Compare § 10; above, p. 171.]

Digitized by Google

to moral, as the root of intellectual, strength. Nay, better that no proof should be made, no signet set, than that the years which might be fruitful in reverence and purity should be lost in prurient self-assertion, or in the experimental and timid touch of the fringe of the Tempter's garment, from which it is not virtue that will issue, but Death. Who is the greatest, or who the least among our children, may it not perhaps be vain to discern, or to declare; but not in vain would be the assurance that none, here trusted to your shepherding in innocence, went forth from your fold torn or betrayed, and that all who came approved from your tribunal had lived a knightly life, and mixed with no stain of dishonour the dew of their youth. What other record can you sinlessly render of them than this, holding as you do your authority at once from the hope of their dead ancestors, and by the trust of their sires on earth, and by delegation from their Father in Heaven —authority thrice paternal and divine;—called therefore to hear and to answer in your mortal power and measure their prayer and that of all who love them, that you Lead them not into Temptation, but deliver them from Evil?

Digitized by Google

V

MODERN ART

(1867)

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This lecture was in part delivered at the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, on Friday, June 7, 1867; the President, Sir Henry Holland, Bart., F.R.S., in the Chair. A mention of the lecture, with the full title as given opposite but without any abstract, appears in the Institution's *Notices of Proceedings*, vol. v. p. 187.

The lecture was briefly reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, June 11, 1867; the report was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, December 1891, vol. iii. pp. 184–185, and thence in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii., 1892, p. 206.

The report says, "The speaker concluded by a few general suggestions as to what features are desirable in a National Gallery, most of which he did not read, but left for publication in the Proceedings of the Institution." No abstract of the lecture, however, appeared there. It is clear from a passage in *Time and Tide* (Vol. XVII. p. 469) that Ruskin intended to include the lecture in one of his books. This, however, he never did; and it is now for the first time printed from the author's manuscript. Some passages in the MS. were struck through, in order to shorten the lecture in delivery, but it is here given as originally written.]

Digitized by Google

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF MODERN ART, WITH REFERENCE TO THE ADVISABLE ARRANGEMENTS OF A NATIONAL GALLERY

(*A Lecture delivered at the British Institution*, 1867)

1. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I never began an address under a more painful sense of its needing a long and very sincerely apologetic preface, nor with less time to speak one, for, as it is, I have had the greatest difficulty in bringing what I desired to lay before you into any manageable compass, and I have been forced to set down many things in apparently broken connection, to which I must in the outset try to give tenable clue. The whole body of the public is now interested and agitated by many questions respecting academies, galleries, and exhibitions of art; our preparatory art schools are becoming important national institutions, and their productions a valuable item of national wealth. But in all these efforts one fact seems to me much overlooked, and just the fact which, after thirty years of study of this subject, is of all that I perceived the most clearly manifest to me, namely, that the teaching of art from without is quite unimportant compared to the instinct of it from within; that we cannot by formal instruction obtain anything but a delusive imitation of it, and that all of it which is genuine springs necessarily from the national temper and life.[1]

2. The art of a nation much resembles the corolla of a flower; its brightness of colour is dependent on the

[1] [Compare the preceding lecture and *Queen of the Air*, §§ 102 *seq.* (pp. 389 *seq.*); see also *Sesame and Lilies*, § 34 (Vol. XVIII. p. 88).]

Digitized by Google

general health of the plant, and you can only command the hue, or modify the form of the blossom, by medicine or nourishment applied patiently to the root, not by manipulation of the petals. I am going to endeavour, therefore, this evening, first to sketch in such brief way as may be in the time possible, some of the main characteristics of our modern European art, in their connection with the phases of temper and moral habit to which they owe their origin, as far as I can understand them; then, in the second place, I shall endeavour to state some of the practical means by which instruction may be given in harmony with [what] is best, and correction of what is dangerous, in these popular dispositions. And I will enter at once on my task with this plea for your indulgence, that if the little I can touch upon in so complex a subject seems to you rightly traced, you must not withhold your consent to it because much must always remain to be explained, nor blame me if, endeavouring in the space of half-an-hour to sketch the scheme of machinery [for] a most important branch of public education, I cannot enter into the detailed question of the ways and means for its immediate establishment.

3. Addressing ourselves, therefore, to discern the inner impulse and temper of our modern art, I would say that its first characteristic is its Compassionateness—its various human sympathy even warping it away from its own proper sources of power, and turning the muse of painting into a sister of Charity. And this is especially shown in the importance which subjects exhibiting the life of the humbler classes have assumed, and by the delicate treatment of these. For in older art poverty was only studied for its picturesqueness—now it is tenderly watched for its mental character; of old we painted only the rags of the poor—but now, their distress. For indeed, though there never was a period in which that distress was more wantonly and widely inflicted by carelessness, there also never was a period in which it was so faithfully and brotherly pitied and helped, when it is truly discerned. The sentence which

Digitized by Google

Eugène Sue takes for his text in the *Mysteries of Paris*[1]—"Si les Riches savaient"—is indeed the key to all our error and cruelty—"If the Rich only knew."

4. I need only give you one instance—you will remember multitudes—but I name[2] a French painter whose name—like that of Michael Angelo, and of Raphael, and of Titian, and of Rubens—is so curiously expressive of his appointed task[3]—Edward Frère (Edward the Brother). I name him, for though his own work is not now what it was once, he has educated a large school of followers in France, many of them worthy ones, and he has done this because—forgive me if I read you words written of him long ago, for they contain just what I want to say, and it is needless to alter them—because he has "approached the simplest subject with perfect feeling of its great humanity, conscious of all the most solemn pathos which there is in the crowned sorrows of poverty, and calm submissions of toil; interpreting to the full, and for the first time in the history of sacred paintings, the great words of the first Beatitude. For the

[1] [For other references to the *Mystères de Paris*, see Vol. V. p. 372 *n.*; Vol. VI. p. 398; and Vol. XIV. p. 92.]

[2] [The MS. as first written reads:—

> "I name the work of Edward Frère (and note for an instant coincidence of names—Michael, Raphael, Tiziano, Rubens, Frère), and I will read this note on the picture of the Prayer. [*Academy Notes*, 1857 (Vol. XIV. p. 143).] But recollect, also, as a fact especially memorable, indicative of this sympathy, [one of] the greatest masters now living in England learned the dialect of the lowest and guiltiest classes of the poor in London, and disguised himself and lived among them until he knew them thoroughly, and then devoted all the remaining energy of his life to redeem them from the habits of drunkenness which he supposed to be the origin of their misery. That is the primal . . ."

For the allusions to Cruikshank, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 25 (above, pp. 76–77).]

[3] [Ruskin was fond of finding this kind of significance in names. Thus in one of his note-books he says:—

> "Rubens, of the moon, in Horace, *Odes*, ii. 11, 10. Singular! The names Titian and Rubens' warm moonlight."

And in a letter to his father he wrote (Mornex, March 22, 1863):—

> "The great old wrathful legislator's name, Draco, the Dragon, fits exactly as I want—legislation or law of the *worm* and of death—the worm that dies not. There is a curious providence in the names of many great men. 'Titian' is colour and touch, in sound. Shakespeare—what could have been grander? Dante, Spenser, Milton—what sweetness in mere syllable! Shelley—just what he was, sweet, distorted, wild on sea shore, and so on. Michael Angelo—the whole soul of the man in his name."

For the reference here to "Draconian," see *Munera Pulveris*, § 120 (Vol. XVII. p. 120); the passage in Horace is "neque uno Luna rubens nitet voltu."]

Digitized by Google

poverty which was honoured by the great painters and thinkers of the Middle Ages was an ostentatious, almost a presumptuous poverty; if not this, at least it was chosen and accepted—the poverty of men who had . . . a proud understanding of their own self-denial, and a confident hope of future reward. But it has been reserved for this age to perceive and tell the blessedness of another kind of poverty than this—not voluntary nor proud, but accepted and submissive; not clear-sighted nor triumphant, but subdued and patient; . . . too laborious to be thoughtful, too innocent to be conscious, too long experienced in sorrow to be hopeful, waiting in its peaceful darkness for the unconceived dawn; yet not without its own sweet, complete, untainted happiness, like intermittent notes of birds before the daybreak, or the first gleams of heaven's amber on the eastern grey. Such poverty as this is has been reserved for the age to come to honour it, and to spare."[1]

5. (I.) That is the primal characteristic then of modern art—its compassionateness. It draws the poor instead of the noble. It draws by choice Peasants instead of Kings, Peasants instead of Gods. Or is it indeed in their stead that it draws them? May we not ask at a pause whether it could find elsewhere Gods and Kings to draw? Whether what of kingly and Divine it can find be not mostly among the lowly, and whether what seems a preference of the wretched before the noble, be not a kind of witness that in these days the wretched are the most noble?

6. (II.) Then the second characteristic is Domesticity. All previous art contemplated men in their public aspect, and expressed only their public Thought. But our art paints their home aspect, and reveals their home thoughts. Old art waited reverently in the Forum. Ours plays happily in the Nursery; we may call it briefly—conclusively—Art of the Nest. It does not in the least appeal for appreciation to the proud civic multitude, rejoicing in procession and assembly. It appeals only to Papa and Mama

[1] [*Academy Notes*, 1858 (Vol. XIV. pp. 174–175). Ruskin omits two passages from this extract.]

Digitized by Google

and Nurse. And these not being in general severe judges, painters must be content if a great deal of the work produced for their approbation should be ratified by their's only.

7. (III.) Connected with this Domestic character is the third, I am sorry to say now no more quite laudable, attribute of modern work—its shallowness. A great part of the virtue of Home is actually dependent on Narrowness of thought. To be quite comfortable in your nest, you must not care too much about what is going on outside. You must be deeply interested in little things, and greatly enjoy moderate things; that is all very bright and right on one side of it, but the morals of home, like its prettiest tapestry, have a wrong side as well as a right, and when we simply transfer that phrase of home morality to art morality, and say that this art of the nest "is deeply interested in little things and greatly enjoys moderate things," we seem to have turned our wrong side outwards. And thus while the pictures of the Middle Ages are full of intellectual matter and meaning—schools of philosophy and theology, and solemn exponents of the faiths and fears of earnest religion—we may pass furlongs of exhibition wall without receiving any idea or sentiment, other than that home-made ginger is hot in the mouth, and that it is pleasant to be out on the lawn in fine weather.

8. (IV.) But farther—and worse. As there is in the spirit of domesticity always a sanctified littleness, there may be also a sanctified selfishness, and a very fearful one. A man will openly do an injustice for his family's sake which he would never have done for his own; and the womanly tenderness, meant by Heaven to comfort the stranger and cherish the desolate,[1] may, in totally unconscious selfishness, passionately exhaust itself in the sweet servilities and delicious anxieties of home. To every great error there is as great an opposite error, and the fault of modesty and simplicity which is blind to every duty but that of the family, and to every need but that of the native land, has

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 86 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 136 *seq.*).]

Digitized by Google

been fatally reversed by the ascetic or missionary enthusiasm which fills the convent quiet with useless virtue, and slakes the desert sands with noble blood.

But between these there is a state of disciplined citizenship, in which the household, beloved in solemn secrecy of faithfulness, is nevertheless subjected always in thought and act to the deeper duty rendered to the larger home of the State. This ideal of citizenship has been always approached in states capable either of great art or wise legislation. From this ideal we have grievously fallen; we have retracted our consciences and affections wholly under the shadow of the roof, and losing the tenure and edified strength of national fellowship, have rounded our interests into petty spheres that clash together like the dissolute pebbles of the beach. To such a nation no policy is possible but one determined by chance, and no art possible but that of petty purposes and broken designs.

9. (V.) Then the next characteristic of modern art, sequent partly upon this privacy and partly on the extent of recent discovery, is its eccentricity. As we live much by ourselves, so we form strong personal characters and prejudices, and these are farther modified by the variety of circumstance induced by modern adventure and invention, while the difficulty of consistent teaching multiplies with our multitudes, and the sense of every word we utter is lost in the hubbub of voices. Hence we have of late learned the little we could, each of us by our own weary gleaning or collision with contingent teachers, none of whom we recognize as wise, or listen to with any honest reverence. If we like what they say, we adopt it and over-act it; if we dislike, we refuse and contradict it. And therefore our art is a chaos of small personal powers and preferences, of originality corrupted by isolation or of borrowed merit appropriated by autograph of private folly. It is full of impertinent insistence upon contrary aims and competitive display of diverse dexterities, most of them ignorant, all of them partial, pitifully excellent, and deplorably admirable.

Digitized by Google

10. (VI.) And the last of which I would speak, and most fatal, in some of its consequences, of all habits of modern art, is its desire of dramatic excitement. And here I must pause for a moment to explain clearly the difference between constant and dramatic art. Constant art represents beautiful things, or creatures, for the sake of their own worthiness only; they are in perfect repose, and are there only to be looked at. They are doing nothing. It is what they are, not what they are doing, which is to interest you.[1] Perugino's St. Michael in our National Gallery, for instance, or Donatello's St. George (at Kensington), or the Theseus of the Parthenon, or the Venus of Melos, are instances.[2] They are simply standing to be looked at—you have not the least notion what they are going to do or what they are thinking. All the greatest work of the Greeks and all good portraiture of every age is of this kind. Dramatic art, on the other hand, represents an action in some way; the personages of it may be as noble or beautiful as those of the classic school, but they must be doing or suffering something, and the spectator is interested in what is happening, as well as by the beauty of the actors or sufferers. Leonardo's Cena, Michael Angelo's Last Judgment, and Raphael's Cartoons are received examples of dramatic art. Now, of course, you may unite both of these characters. Retaining the perfectness of form which is essential in the classic school, you may add gradually more and more of interest to the action until, as in Titian's Assumption or Tintoret's Christ before Pilate, it becomes, to the ordinary spectator, of dominant attraction.[3]

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says in a similar sense in "Verona and its Rivers," §§ 26–28 (below, pp. 444–445, where he again instances the Perugino as a case in point), and *The Relation of Michael Angelo to Tintoret* (where he instances Donatello).]

[2] [For other references to the Perugino (No. 288 in the National Gallery), see Vol. XV. p. 170 *n*. Donatello's "St. George" at the South Kensington Museum is an ancient cast, in a carved wooden frame of the sixteenth century, from the marble bas-relief at the Church of Or San Michele in Florence; for another reference to it, see *Mornings in Florence*, § 16. For the numerous references to the "Theseus" in the British Museum, see the General Index; and for the Venus of Melos in the Louvre, *Queen of the Air*, § 167 (below, p. 413); *Aratra Pentelici*, § 194; and again *The Relation of Michael Angelo to Tintoret*.]

[3] [For the dramatic, "bustling" quality of Titian's "Assumption," see the *Guide to the Venetian Academy*; for "Christ before Pilate," Vol. IV. p. 274, and Vol. XI. p. 427.]

Digitized by Google

The best masters introduce it usually with great reserve. In the statue of the Apollo Sauroctonos[1] the character of the Power which cleanses the Earth and Heaven from all impurity is expressed by the very slight drama of killing a Lizard. In Raphael's Parnassus[2] the interest is little more than that of conversation among majestic company. In the Heliodorus the drama equally divides the claim of the whole work, but the great masters never allow more than that divided claim. The abstract majesty of the figures is secured first, whether their act be interesting or not. In vulgar art, on the contrary, the drama or story become principal; the spectator does not care whether the figures are beautiful or rightly executed, he only cares about what is going on.

11. Now this dramatic art is vulgar for two reasons—the first, that vulgar people can enjoy a story though they cannot judge of perfect form or character; and the second, that the nobler a person is as a subject of art, the more interesting it becomes to see rather what he is than what he is doing. The nature and essence of him is eternal and of infinite moment—that is what you want to see. Nothing that he can momentarily do or sustain is of any importance compared with that. Now the entire tendency of modern art is to become dramatic. The lower people of course like it, and inferior painters can produce it. For one man who can paint a beautiful form ten can tell a pleasant story, and ten times ten can tell an unpleasant story. Nevertheless, a great deal of very lovely result has been obtained, on both sides, in humour and in pathos—Wilkie and Leslie,[3] and the schools they have founded (there is an exquisite little piece of quiet drama by Leslie's son in the Academy of this year: "Ten minutes to decide"[4]),

[1] [There are statues of this subject, founded on the work of Praxiteles, in the Louvre and the Vatican respectively.]

[2] [For the Parnassus, see above, p. 103; for an allusion to the "Expulsion of Heliodorus," in another of the Stanze of the Vatican, *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 20.]

[3] [For Ruskin's views on Wilkie, see Vol. XVI. p. 415 and *n.*; and for Leslie, Vol. XIV. p. 37.]

[4] [No. 131 in the Royal Academy of 1867: by G. D. Leslie, now R.A. The picture (painted for Sir Edwin Landseer, and now in the possession of Lady Wantage)

Digitized by Google

Paul de la Roche[1] and his school—and many excellent German and Flemish painters,[2] among whom I cannot venture to particularize, have contributed greatly to the instruction and comfort of innumerable households; and as the peculiar instinct of a century always has some culminating expression—the landscape interest, which begins in liking to play on the lawn, culminated in Turner—so the dramatic interest, which begins in merely domestic incident, rose into the splendid and passionate effort lately made by the best of our younger painters in religious art, of which I must ask your leave to explain, at the risk of some tediousness, the actual nature.

12. Observe, first, one of the chief ways in which the great masters kept their Dramatic subordinate to their Constant art was by suggesting the action in a quaint and unliteral manner; not as it ever could have actually happened, but as the sign of its having happened, or rather of something greater having happened. Take this sketch of Holbein's, for instance.[3] I cannot show you a grander piece of ideal art. It is not meant here that the angel is striking, or the demon struggling, or the little soul pulling at the scales in any physical manner. All three actions are in some degree purposefully impossible and false to show that they are ideal and symbolical actions, meaning a very different thing from common striking and common weighing. Now there is nothing more beautiful than this kind of reserve as practised by the great men; but an evil consequence followed from it—that people got out of the habit of thinking at all how things did take place or could

represents the troubles of a girl whose father wishes her to marry some one against her inclinations. He stands, a short distance off, on a little bridge with his watch in his hand, having given her "ten minutes to decide." A girl friend is giving her comfort or advice; a servant, with a horse, is at a gate, in the background, waiting to carry the lady's answer. The scene takes place in a garden with a brook running through it.]

[1] [For Paul Delaroche, see above, p. 50.]

[2] [As, for instance, in the painters of the Düsseldorf school, mentioned in Vol. VII. p. 338.]

[3] [Ruskin here showed a photograph of Holbein's drawing (No. 133 in the Museum of Bâle) of the Archangel Michael; with the scales in his left hand, he holds a sword above his head as if to strike Satan, who is trying to weigh down a Redeemed Soul in the opposite scale.]

Digitized by Google

really have taken place, and, by accepting symbols of drama for true drama, gradually came to regard the truths of human history and religion as if they were all symbolisms.[1] And besides that, a quantity of utterly vile and vapid art followed in imitation of the great school in which the drama was false from real want of understanding or invention and not from reserve. And against this false and decayed school rose up the modern English school of true and literal drama. Turner's picture of Apollo killing the Python,[2] as opposed to the treatment of the same subject on Greek vases, is the first great example of it that I know; but the founder and leader of the school, in its more important relations to Christian art, was Dante Gabriel Rossetti.[3] He was the first who set the example of a living dramatic truth in conceptions of events in sacred history. We will not any more, said he and his followers, think of Christ and the Madonna as they never could have been seen by human eyes. We will not make the figures of them mere illuminated letters for the better glorifying of our own sentiments. We will think of them to the utmost of our power as they were truly seen on the earth—as they lived and moved and suffered. We may think erroneously, but at least we will think honestly and earnestly, and paint what seems to us likeliest to have been the fact.[4]

18. Together with Rossetti, and at first working wholly under his guidance, but differing from him entirely in certain conditions of temperament, and especially in having purer sympathy for the repose of the Constant schools, rose up another, I do not fear to say, great dramatic master—Edward Burne-Jones. He did not begin art early enough

[1] [Ruskin traces this process more at length in the fourth chapter of the third volume of *Modern Painters* (Vol. V.).]

[2] [No. 488 in the National Gallery: see Vol. XIII. p. 122, and the other passages there noted. Ruskin afterwards took a typical Greek representation of Apollo and the Python (on a coin, however, not a vase) for comparison with the dramatic methods of modern art: see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 192, and the plate there.]

[3] [Compare *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, and Lecture i. ("Realistic Schools of Painting") in *The Art of England*.]

[4] [Here the MS. has "Then explain picture." Ruskin showed perhaps his drawing by Rossetti of "The Passover"; or a photograph of the picture "Ecce Ancilla Domini," which he analyses in *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 3.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Sir E Burne-Jones

Allen & Co

Love leading Alcestis

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

in boyhood;[1] and therefore, in spite of all his power and genius, his pictures were at first full of very visible faults, which he is gradually conquering. In spite of what still remain of these, his designs bid fair to be quite dominant in the English dramatic school;[2] and already, in those qualities which are most desirable and inimitable, may challenge comparison with the best dramatic design of the great periods, and in its purity and seeking for good and virtue as the life of all things and creatures, his designs stand, I think, unrivalled and alone.

14. I did not mean this to be an illustrated lecture, and I only sent in to-day what I could lay hand on. This first cartoon is a sketch for tapestry, from Chaucer, of Love bringing in Alcestis.[3] Alcestis, as you know, is the Greek womanly type of the faithfulness and eternity of Love. She gives up her life for her husband's, and is then restored to him from the grave. In Chaucer the Spirit of Love which leads her is only that of perfect human passion:—

> "Yclothed was this mighty God of Love
> In silk, embroudered full of red rose leaves—
> The freshest since the world was first begun—
> And his gilt hair was crowned with a sun
> Instead of gold;
> And in his hand methought I saw him hold
> Two fiery darts, as the coals red;
> And angel-like his wings I saw him spread."[4]

---

[1] [Burne-Jones had been intended for the Church. The "first step in his artistic life" (a series of pen and ink designs) was not taken till he was twenty-one, and it was not till 1856 that, under Rossetti's influence, he finally selected the artistic career. "He was now close upon twenty-three years of age, a time when painters should have mastered the mechanical part of their craft, and he was only at its beginning" (*Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, vol. i. pp. 100, 136).]

[2] [Ten years later Ruskin proclaimed the realisation of such predictions. The work of Burne-Jones, he said, "is simply the only art-work at present produced in England which will be received by the future as 'classic' in its kind" (*Fors Clavigera*, Letter 79); and compare, again, *The Art of England*, Lecture ii., and *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*.]

[3] [Plate VI.; the sketch is now in the Ruskin Drawing School.]

[4] [From the Prologue to the *Legende of Goode Women*. Chaucer wrote, after the first line:—

> "In silke embrouded, ful of grene greves,
> In which a fret of rede rose leves."

The fifth line continues, "for hevynesse and wyghte," and then Ruskin omits two lines. The last line but one is in the original, "Twoo firy dartes, as the gledes rede" (gledes = burning coals).]

Digitized by Google

But in this design the painter has gone farther into the meaning of the old Greek myth, and he has given the Spirit of the Love that lives beyond the grave—pilgrim love, which goes forth into another country and to a far distant shrine, and thinks to find no resting-place but in heaven—

> "Love that groweth into faith;
> Love that seeth over death;
> Love that, with his loving eyes,
> Looks on into Paradise."

I do not know yet in art the expression of any so beautiful thought as this, respecting the purest source of human valour and virtue.

15. Then this second cartoon,[1] also from the Legend of Good Women,[2] is of the two wives of Jason—Hypsipyle and Medea; and I want you to note in it again the special gift of the painter in seizing the good, and disdaining evil. For in the legend of Medea—as we usually read it and think of it—a common painter would have discerned only a cruel and enraged sorceress. But Medea is more than a Sorceress.[3] Her name means Counsellor, Designer—as the name of Jason means the healer; she is, in fact, the Pallas or Minerva of the lower phases of human art, and her terror is that of Wisdom forsaken or despised, corresponding to the snake-fringed ægis of Pallas herself. Again Hypsipyle is the type of the patience and protective gentleness of the affections—she having saved her father from the rage of the Lemnian women[4]—and the painter has therefore endeavoured to express together these two ideals of gentleness and wisdom, but the last, in the power of it and the authority, dark and inexorable.

16. There is another picture I must name, by Burne-Jones—the Dorothea in the water-colour exhibition; but

[1] [Plate VII.; also in the Ruskin Drawing School.]
[2] [The "Legenda Ypsiphile et Medee, Martiris."]
[3] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, § 78 (Vol. XVIII. p. 298).]
[4] [As related by Ovid in the *Heroides*, Ep. vi. When the other Lemnian women put all their men to death, Hypsipyle spared the life of her father, the king, Thoas.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Two Wives of Jason

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

before coming to it I have a word or two to say respecting the entire influence of dramatic painting on our modern thirst for occasional display in these great Paris and London exhibitions. This fury for the sight of new things, with which we are now infected and afflicted, though partly the result of everything being made a matter of trade, is yet more the consequence of our thirst for dramatic instead of classic work. For when we are interested by the beauty of a thing, the oftener we can see it the better; but when we are interested only by the story of a thing, we get tired of hearing the same tale told over and over again, and stopping always at the same point—we want a new story presently, a new and better one—and the picture of the day, and novel of the day, become as ephemeral as the coiffure or the bonnet of the day. Now this spirit is wholly adverse to the existence of any lovely art. If you mean to throw it aside to-morrow, you never can have it to-day. If any one had really understood the motto from Keats, which was blazoned at the extremity of the first Manchester exhibition building,[1] they would have known that it was the bitterest satire they could have written there, against that building itself and all its meanings—"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever." It is not a joy for three days, limited by date of return ticket, nor is it ever produced by a man who works for exhibition; I do not say that the best men *will* never work for exhibition, but I do say that so far as they allow any such motive to affect them, their work becomes bad. The best art that at any given time may be produced, is produced by the best men working in peace, not for large bribe of money, not for wide clash of popular acclaim, but for moderate pay and for sober spectators, and out of the abundance of their own hearts;[2] and when a thing is so done, it is an inheritance for ever—nothing can afterwards take its place.

17. For at every national epoch there is a certain virtue

[1] [See *A Joy for Ever*, Preface of 1880 (Vol. XVI. p. 11).]
[2] [Matthew xii. 34: compare pp. 164, 188.]

Digitized by Google

peculiar to it which, when once rightly embodied, under whatever limitation of knowledge, gives an eternal value to the thing so honourably done. And every year of a nation's life ought to add steadily to this accumulated mass of true ancestral treasure, in which its history should be inscribed—in which, if it really have a history, it is sure to be inscribed—more deeply and brightly than in any books; and thus its houses, its streets, its churches, its places of public resort and public occupation should be gradually increasing in riches of harmonious and intelligent art by every law of intellect demonstrably worthy, and to every healthy instinct of life delightful. From such result, and all possibility of it, we are every day farther receding—art is the monster of a caravan; our exhibitions are neither more nor less than bazaars of ruinously expensive toys, or of pictures degraded to the function of toys;[1] and our real wealth and progress in creative power are indicated only by Babylonian wildernesses of brickfield, white with slime, by a continually festering cancer of waste ground among skeletons of buildings, rotten before they are inhabited, and by the extending procession, wherever there was once cleanliness or dignity and peace, of the unclean paling, frescoed only by the bill-sticker with pictures of talking heads fallen from the guillotine, and advertisements of cheap clothes at the sign of the Bon Diable. Now I assure you solemnly that these squalid spaces of filth and disorder, and these frescoes of the bill-sticker—one more monstrous than the other—and these shops in your main public thoroughfares filled with base photographs and the woodcuts of murder and burglary, which render your penny literature chiefly saleable, these are your true elements of popular education—these, as opposed to the frescoed cloister of the Campo Santo of Pisa and frescoed streets of Padua and Verona—and against this popular education your art schools cannot stand. If you

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the seriousness of true art, in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 26).]

Digitized by Google

teach broad-cast evil in the highway, you shall teach no good in the school.

18. And now from that magnificent popular fresco of the talking head, let me go back to Burne-Jones's Dorothea.[1] I do so that it may illustrate for you this great principle respecting the usefulness or mischief of Dramatic work. So long as the incidents you are required to take pleasure in are pleasurable and honourable, the character of the art is safe; but the moment the incidents are painful or ignoble, you are on steep steps of ruin. Now in that Dorothea, which is nearly a perfect dramatic work, the entire interest is concentrated on the beautiful circumstance of the angel bringing the flowers from heaven. The burial of St. Dorothy is far in the background. Had this same subject been treated by one of the Caracci or by Domenichino[2] the dead body would have been in the foreground with the visible gash through the neck, and the angel with the roses in an imperceptible corner. Now it would be perfectly possible, by no other test than this mode of regarding painful and beautiful incident, to separate for you the schools of all time into great families. More simply, I may say, by their modes of regarding Life and Death, Beauty and Corruption. By no more crucial test could you examine

[1] [No. 12 in the summer exhibition (1867) of the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours: "Theophilus and the Angel: a Legend of the Martyrdom of St. Dorothea." The drawing was again exhibited at St. Jude's, Whitechapel, 1883, when the following explanatory note was given in the Catalogue: "The story tells that when Dorothea, a Christian martyr, was being led out to execution, Theophilus, a young lawyer, had called out mockingly, 'Send me, I pray thee, of the fruit and flowers of that same garden of Paradise, of which thou hast spoken.' Dorothea had promised to grant his request, and had gone cheerfully to death. The picture shows us on the right her sorrowing friends bearing her body to burial, whilst in the centre we see the Roman consul leaving the market-place, where a platform has been erected close to the block for the Roman ladies to see the execution. On the left is Theophilus, no longer mocking, but already with 'a new perception born of grieving love'; and, as he turns, he will see the angel holding a basket of roses and apples, who will say to him, 'Dorothea has sent these to thee, and awaits thee whence they came.' Theophilus, so the story runs, straightway resolved to become a soldier of Christ, and following Dorothea's example, obtained like her the Crown of Martyrdom." The drawing was again shown, by Mr. A. E. Street, at the Burne-Jones Exhibition at the New Gallery in 1898–1899 (No. 72).]

[2] [For the "coarseness" of the Caracci, see *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 254); for the baseness of Domenichino, *ibid.*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 184).]

Digitized by Google

the schools of literature and art than simply by their mode of regarding Death itself—from the battles of Homer and the gloom of Greek tragedy, through the Trionfo della Morte of Orcagna[1] down to Shakespearian tragedy and Holbein's Dance of Death, and all that is connected with these; and, in evil modernism, through the dissection scene of Rembrandt down to the raft of the Medusa[2] and other typical examples of modern sensational drama.[3]

19. I think it is the strangest form of curse and corruption which attends humanity, but it is a quite inevitable one, that whenever there is a ruthless pursuit of sensational pleasure it always ends in an insane and wolf-like gloating over the garbage of Death.[4] As I have shown you here an instance of the highest reach of modern art, on the sacred side of it, so I have here in my hand some leaves exemplifying this its worst corruption.

I could have brought far worse ones, if I had chosen, out of the work of the man whom the British public has called, almost by acclamation, to illustrate its Bible for it, and Tennyson's *Elaine*.[5] Look at these leaves a little after the lecture, and turn from them to these, and meditate for yourselves upon this most significant fact, that here in religious England this man's work has been mocked and despised, and this man's, Gustave Doré's, received with a shout of devotional enthusiasm.

20. But as you cannot see the leaves at this distance, that you may understand clearly what I mean, I will

[1] [For other references to this fresco, see Vol. V. p. 86, Vol. XII. pp. 112, 146, 224; and for Holbein's "Dance of Death," Vol. V. p. 131, Vol. XV. p. 380.]

[2] [For Rembrandt's "Anatomy Lesson," see above, p. 110. The "Raft of the Medusa," by J. L. A. T. Géricault (1791–1824), was exhibited in London in 1820, and attracted great notice then. It is now in the Louvre (No. 338). For another reference to the picture (there referred to as "The Starving Crew"), see *Lectures on Landscape*, § 43.]

[3] [Here Ruskin continued: "But the sum of all is this, that when a nation is ethically pure and noble . . ." (repeating § 35 in the preceding lecture; see above, p. 190).]

[4] [For other passages in which Ruskin notes the modern gloating over death, see pp. 190, 260.]

[5] [For Doré's illustrations to the Bible, see *Time and Tide*, §§ 31, 40, 47; and for his *Elaine*, *ibid.*, § 102 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 346, 352, 357, 401).]

Digitized by Google

instance something of the same kind, which you may, most of you, remember. In the old manner of performing *Robert le Diable*, in the great cloister scene, the nuns after they rose out of their tombs, disappeared, and the ballet dancers were substituted for them; you did not see the dead bodies and ballet dancers at the same time. But when this opera was last given in England, so mad had the thirst for excitement of this horrible kind become, that it was thought the audience would not be sufficiently entertained by seeing first the corpses and afterwards the dancing, but you had the entire dance given with a row of corpses holding the torches for it.[1]

21. Now the feeling which rendered it possible for an English high-caste audience to sit and see this, has, of course, penetrated more or less into the whole body of society, showing itself most fatally among the neglected children of the lower orders. May I ask you to get and read carefully this article on "Poor Playgrounds" in *All the Year Round* for May 4th [1867], and note this passage respecting the first visit of four London-bred girls to Hampstead Heath:—

"For some time I could talk to them and interest them; at last, wearied, I left them to talk among themselves. Of the foulness of their talk it would be impossible to write; of the death of all sensitiveness, and substitution of the love of horror for the love of beauty. The least awful part of it was a description of all the bodies that had been taken out of the Paddington Canal when last cleaned, gross descriptions of their appearance, and gross speculations as to their histories. The long curved line of trees, in the first glory of gold-green foliage, showed between their as yet thinly covered branches a mist of blue distance, at which I sat and gazed; and somehow the natural beauty made me feel with a deeper awe the pollution of these young human spirits. So I have often returned, after some hours in the court, with so vivid a sense of the savagery of the people there, that the commonest civilities among educated people have seemed to me lovely."[2]

"With so vivid a sense of the savagery of the people there"—note the words, written by a woman whose whole

[1] [Compare Vol. XVIII. pp. 95, 543.]

[2] [The article, which is unsigned, is by Miss Octavia Hill, and records the purchase of a piece of ground in a very wretched court in Marylebone for a playground for poor children. "It is not the place here to speak of our tenants and

Digitized by Google

life has been spent, and nearly spent to the death, not in preaching vain words, but in doing brave and tender acts of continual help. Some assertions of mine of the same kind have been lately denied, of which I will only say that there may be other reasons than this inaccuracy of them for my not at present choosing publicly to defend them.[1] But of the visible squalor and misery you can yourselves judge, if you care to judge, when you choose: —"On Tuesday persons were knocked down and robbed of their watches in open daylight, and that even in the best thoroughfares of the most respectable and fashionable parts of London."[2]

22. For the primal and final fact of which to-night I desire to convince you is that the compassionateness, which has been hitherto so much ideal, must be made first wholly practical; that is the true Instinct, the true heavenly passion of this epoch; so far as you obey that by faithful working, so far also all decorative and pleasurable work will become true and lovely in your hands. Disobey that instinct, play with it, seek only dramatic pleasure from it, and you will find that your delight changes into a guilty dream, and that your idle fingers are playing with the fringes of the shroud.

23. The beginning of all ideal art must be for us in the realistic art of bestowing health and happiness. The first schools of beauty must be the streets of your cities, and

the alterations in the cottages, for which, as well as for the entire sum required for the purchase of the playground, we are indebted to Mr. Ruskin. We want fellow-workers greatly. The work requires to be done by constant personal teaching and direction." For particulars of Miss Hill's work, see above, Introduction, p. xxiv., and compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 10.]

[1] [Here Ruskin refers to his record in *Time and Tide* of a conversation in which Carlyle had spoken of the savagery of the London populace, and to Carlyle's public repudiation of the words. The repudiation had been made just before the present lecture was delivered: see Vol. XVII. pp. 480–482. Ruskin, as will there be seen, maintained the accuracy of his report, but he did not pursue the controversy in public—not caring "to lay hands on his father, Parmenides."]

[2] [This is a quotation from a leading article in the *Morning Post* of June 6, 1867.]

Digitized by Google

the chief of our fair designs must be to keep the living creatures round us clean, and in human comfort—primarily clean.[1] Any Christian nation allowing its poor to remain filthy and sickly, is by that one fact proved to be in so false and hollow a state of mind that it can perceive no moral truth nor technical law relating to higher functions. I have felt and spoken as much as most people about the symbolism of things, and I am bold to say I enjoy and understand as well as other people the pleasantness of church spires, and church music, and church windows, and church clothes, and the like. I will go as far as any of you—there's not a girl here, in the purest glow of her sweet fanciful faith, whom I would not sympathize with and help in due time and order, in her embroidery and her garlanding, and illuminating and text-flourishing, and all the rest of it. But before you come to any of this, there is the first of the Church Sacraments, which you must see to the due acceptance and understanding of; there is the Entrance Sacrament of Baptism, and that—though it means ultimately and virtually much more than the putting away of the filth of the flesh—most assuredly, in the first place, does mean the putting away of the filth of the flesh, and I say boldly that any Baptized creature left to rot in filth, signifies that it has got un-Baptized Creatures to deal with it, who have left it, with Cain's speech on their lips—"Am I my brother's Keeper?"[2]

That, I assure you again—and in these, perhaps for many a day, the last words I shall utter about art[3]—*that* is the beginning of Art as of Religion. Get your lower orders washed and comfortable. Whatever difficulties are in the way of your doing that, are the main difficulties ahead of you in everything. Conquer those, and you will need neither Parliamentary debates, nor Art lectures; leave them

[1] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 139 (Vol. XVIII. p. 184); *Lectures on Art*, §§ 116, 187; *Aratra Pentelici*, § 138; and *Art of England*, § 123.]
[2] [Genesis iv. 9.]
[3] [Compare above, pp. 23, 38.]

Digitized by Google

unconquered, and every thought, and every voice, will alike be in vain.[1]

24. Now for a population, in a healthy state, there are four kinds of Institutions rightly necessary, partly for their rest, partly for their teaching.

First, in winter there should be warm places—in summer, shady places—where hard-worked people may rest for a little time when they need; and these should be under the continual care of a police superintendent, so that they should be indeed places of rest, orderly and home-like, and undisturbed by the merely curious and idle. I should put some enduring form of mural decoration on the walls and ceilings of these resting-places, and have some flowers about them, and keep them always fresh and cheerful.

25. Then, secondly, there should be public places of amusement for true holiday-makers, and these should be quite distinct from schools, and much more from museums. The British lower public has no very clear notion of the way to amuse itself—does so at present in a very dismal and panic-struck manner; it has a notion of improving its manners and getting useful information at the same time, and so makes its way to the Crystal Palace, and, with its own instincts principally tending towards ginger-beer, hopes also to have its mind enlarged by the assistance of Greek sculpture, always supposing the enlargement of its mind is to tend somehow to the enlargement of pockets, wages, and other substantialities. It relaxes, indeed, towards Christmas-time in these economical views, but becomes in outer aspect even more dismally pensive than at any other period. I went up to the Crystal Palace this last year on Boxing Day to contemplate the recreations, and perhaps some of my audience may remember the strenuous efforts made to obtain at least recreative effect in the interior. In my old studies of architecture I always used to have great regard to the apse of a cathedral,

[1] [Ruskin first wrote ". . . unconquered, and for any good you will get from either, you had better listen to the street hurdy-gurdies."]

Digitized by Google

and whatever else failed, looked always to the close of the great aisled vista as the principal joy of one's heart. And you know this Crystal Palace of ours is always held up to us—superannuated disciples of the old school of work in brick or in marble—as an entirely glorious and exalted novelty superseding everything done yet.[1] So one has a natural tendency to look also to the apse of this cathedral of modern faith to see the symbol of it, as one used to look to the concha of the Cathedral of Pisa for the face of Christ, or to the apse of Torcello for the figure of the Madonna.[2] Well, do you recollect what occupied the place of these—in the apse of the Crystal Palace? The head of a Pantomime clown, some twelve feet broad, with a mouth opening from ear to ear, opening and shutting by machinery, its eyes squinting alternately, and collapsing by machinery, its humour in general provided for by machinery, with the recognised utterance of English Wisdom inscribed above—"Here we are again."[3] But the striking thing of all was that, though as I said the humour of the thing could not but have been perfect—being provided for by machinery—nobody laughed at it. Few even had consistency of comparative observation enough to find out that it moved. When they did, they touched their neighbour's elbow, looked up with a frightened expression for a minute, and passed on, with an appearance of discomfort, knowing that it was their duty to laugh, and failing signally when they tried. And in all the Palace, with its flowers, casts, pictures, shop-stands, and spinning-jennies, I saw, except among the children, not one amused face. There was a good deal of scuffling and noise sometimes, a rude burst of laughter, but no expression of pleasure, far less of attention or admiration.

26. It is not, however, my business to-night to consider how the average holiday-maker might be better amused;

[1] [See Vol. XII. p. 418 *n.*; and Vol. XVIII. p. 243 *n.*]

[2] [For the Christ at Pisa, see the letter cited in a note upon *Aratra Pentelici*, § 55. For the Madonna of Torcello, see *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 184, and *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 21).]

[3] [Ruskin referred again to this inscription also in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 55.]

Digitized by Google

I only want to insist on the distinction between a place of amusement and an art school, and to state very positively that in the degree in which you try to unite them, you destroy the efficiency of both. If I go to the Crystal Palace to make a note on the cast of a statue, it is a considerable nuisance to me to have a party of children chasing each other round it; while to the children themselves, and to their parents much more, the presence of this brittle white spectre—which they ought to admire, and are only afraid of knocking over—is a damping and solemnizing feature of the Palace, fatally destructive of merriment. But I may just say in passing that so far as I have any clear notion of improving such places of recreation, I would, in the first place, make them thoroughly pretty buildings, pleasantly and gracefully decorated, and without any cracks in the floor, making one terrified to pull out a sixpence for fear of dropping it. Then I should give plenty of room for running about, plenty of flowers always carefully named, and with good popular and useful information about them given in a cheap alphabetical catalogue; I should have some elementary branches of natural history, such as anybody could cheaply follow up, thoroughly illustrated; I should have good prints and pictures, permanent always, and well catalogued and explained; and I should use the now exploded panorama and diorama[1] with an attention to truth and a splendour and care in the execution which should—for in this any general rule admits of exception—be very truly a school both in physical geography and in art.

Farther, I am prepared to use the theatre, and that largely, but a very different kind of theatre from any we frequent now; and of course the more good music you can get listened to the better, provided always that it be listened to as music, not as noise.

[1] [Ruskin is thinking of the Panorama in Leicester Square (on the site of the present Alhambra), and of the Diorama in Regent's Park—popular in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century.]

Digitized by Google

27. I pass next to the chief subject of our inquiry—the proper arrangement of public educational collections. Such institutions as they should be distinct from places of public amusement on the one hand, so they should be distinct from national museums on the other. I will read on this point a piece of a letter written to the *Times* last year:[1]—

"There is a confused notion in the existing public mind that the British Museum is partly a parish school, partly a circulating library, and partly a place for Christmas entertainments.

"It is none of the three, and I hope will never be made any of the three. But especially and most distinctly it is not a 'preparatory school,' nor even an 'academy for young gentlemen,' nor even a 'working men's college.' A national museum is one thing, a national place of education another; and the more sternly and unequivocally they are separated the better will each perform its office—the one of treasuring, and the other of teaching. I heartily wish that there were already, as one day there must be, large educational museums in every district of London freely open every day, and well lighted and warmed at night, with all furniture of comfort, and full aids for the use of their contents by all classes. But you might just as rationally send the British public to the Tower to study mineralogy upon the Crown jewels as make the unique pieces of a worthy national collection (such as, owing mainly to the exertions of its maligned officers, that of our British Museum has recently become) the means of elementary public instruction. After men have learnt their science or their art, at least so far as to know a common and a rare example in either, a national museum is useful, and ought to be easily accessible to them; but until then unique or selected specimens in natural history are without interest to them, and the best art is useless as a blank wall."

[1] [A letter from Ruskin himself in the *Times* of January 27, 1866. The rest of the letter is printed below, as an appendix to this lecture: see p. 229.]

Digitized by Google

28. This being so, there are three kinds of national collections which it is desirable should be arranged especially for educational purposes:—

1. Libraries.
2. Educational Museums of Natural History.
3. Educational Museums of Art.

First, of Libraries. The British Museum ought to contain no books except those of which copies are unique or rare. All others should be arranged in smaller public libraries for familiar use with excellent attached reading-rooms, and access to the Museum reading-room should be a matter of higher privilege.

One of the worst sources of [the corruption[1]] of the national temper and intellect is in the irrigation of it by foolish and evil writing overflowing. The Greek Parnassus was of living rock and its Helicon of living waters; but our Parnassus is like the Rossberg,[2] of rolled pebbles and worn fragments, and by the weight of it squeezing out streams of slime. And the thing needing to be done is the selection by our Universities of a series of virtuous, vigorous, helpful, and beautiful examples of literature, not many,[3] but clearly enough for any man's life, and the publication of them in a perfect form;[4] and the founding of a public library in every important town,[5] which should contain this series at least, and copies enough of these to supply all the readers, with reading-rooms attached, into which the entrance should be matter of some difficulty and honourable privilege, yet free on certain conditions to all.

29. Similarly, we require the selection by our Universities, and the purchase by Government, of a limited series of engravings and casts representing works of art of

[1] [The words "of corruption" are here conjecturally inserted; there is a blank in the MS.]

[2] [For other references to the fall of the Rossberg, see Vol. VI. pp. 195 *n.*, 379.]

[3] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface of 1871, § 4 (Vol. XVIII. p. 33).]

[4] [A scheme which Ruskin designed to carry out in his *Bibliotheca Pastorum*: compare Vol. XVIII. p. 104 *n.*]

[5] [Compare Vol. XVIII. pp. xxi., 104.]

Digitized by Google

exclusive and high merits, such as in every respect might form and guide the mind of the student contemplating them; and these, so limited in numbers as to permit attention to be given to every one, and all to be well remembered as parts of a relatively collected whole, should form a small museum in connection with every such public library, and an explanatory catalogue be prepared for them stating whatever facts respecting each it was desirable for the student to know. Farther, every one of our principal cities ought to have a permanent gallery of art[1] of which the function should be wholly educational, as distinguished from the historical and general purposes of the collections in the British Museum and National Gallery. And this should be done under the clear understanding that the utility of an educational collection depends not on its extent, but, first, on the absolute exclusion of all works of secondary merit or of trivial character (so that the full strength of trusting and faithful admiration might be given to whatever was exhibited); and, secondly, on the easy visibility and pleasantly decorous presentation of the works of art contained in them, and on the general comfort and habitableness of the rooms.

30. (2.) Secondly, Educational Museums of Natural History. The Natural History Collection in the British Museum should be as complete as it can by any cost or research be made, but it should contain no inferior or duplicate specimens, and its arrangements should be calculated for scientific reference, not for exhibition. It should only be for the use of advanced students in every science. But the Educational collections of Natural History should be arranged so as to attract and reward inquiry; they should be disposed for exhibition with the utmost convenience and elegance, and elaborately catalogued, with references to the best farther description of each class of objects exhibited. Small libraries containing such books only, should

[1] [See the Introduction; above, p. xxi.]

Digitized by Google

be attached to the collections, with suites of reading-rooms; and while a certain part of the series of exhibited objects was permanent and not permitted to be handled, a sufficient number of inferior specimens replaceable from time to time should be kept in cabinets connected with the reading-rooms, and of these inferior specimens the curator should have the power of permitting quite free experimental use to such students as he might judge deserving of the trust.

31. (3.) Lastly, I come to Schools of Art. And here a quite new consideration introduces itself. In natural history your specimens can only be more or less instructive, they can never be the reverse of instructive. But specimens of art either lead or mislead; there is in these a positive good and a positive bad, and the first condition of your being able to establish a School of Art at all is that you should clearly know one from the other. There is this farther difference also, and a very essential one. While in natural history, if you exclude useless duplicates, you cannot for representation of varieties have too many specimens; in art, you can hardly have too few. The good a student gets from the examination of any work is most strictly proportioned to the strength of feeling and closeness of attention he gives to it, and the feeling will not come at first, nor perhaps for a long time. Your great object should be to fasten this, the student's attention, on the examples required for his help, and then not to distract it. He will get three times as much good from one piece looked at for half-an-hour, as from three looked at for ten minutes each. And, lastly, here is a third and no less vital distinction. In natural history, though good specimens of characteristic average quality are on the whole most useful, it is well occasionally to see the finest types of every species. But in art it is often injurious to see the highest kind until you are ready for them. Not indeed if, as in times of energetic art life, the highest be everywhere a common food: men then take of it, naturally, just as much or little as they like—that is to say, as much or little as they should; but

Digitized by Google

when it is presented to them rarely, and they try to compel themselves into liking it or learning from it—being all the while wholly incapable of entering into its true qualities—it falsifies their whole nature and is mere poison. I could give you some curious personal experiences on this matter, but I must keep to the business in hand.

Our object, then, in the Educational Art Schools should be to arrange a series of specimens, all first-rate of their kind, but for the most part of a description intelligible to the ordinary student—drawings before engravings, for instance, and engraving before painting, and bold dramatic sculpture before refined ideal sculpture—keeping all the highest works of art without any exception in the National Gallery, and only allowing them to be copied or studied from as matter of high privilege.

82. Now to bring these conditions into practice. The first is that you should have no bad art visible anywhere.

This is the great mischief in the Kensington Collection. It is full of precious and instructive things, but they are surrounded by the vilest, and the very aspect of these, even if not chosen for imitation, prevents the qualities of the good ones from being felt. Who is to judge of relative merit, you will ask. Well, the point is simply this: if you cannot find among the upper and educated classes of England a small body of men so far informed on the subject of art as to agree what are its mainly desirable and what its undesirable qualities, you can have no art schools. You can only have a confused museum of objects acquired by chance, out of which the student must learn what he can discover by chance.[1]

83. I do not think, however, that there would be any real difficulty in this. Once fix your principle, that no bad or even gravely deficient art is to be admitted into the educational collections, and you will easily by vote of committee be able to cleanse and purify them to a most

[1] [Compare Ruskin's description of the South Kensington Museum, as "a Cretan labyrinth," in his Letters of 1880 on "A Museum or Picture Gallery" (*On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. p. 627, reprinted in a later volume of this edition).]

Digitized by Google

wholesome and vivifying extent. And the thing I should like to see done is mainly this. Let a certain not extensive but carefully chosen series of casts from sculpture and coins, of photographs from architecture, drawings and natural objects, and of engravings of standard value, be fixed upon as the basis of the educational collection. Let this established series be carefully catalogued, described, and arranged in illustrative order, and let every town possessing an art school do what it can to obtain the nucleus of this appointed series of which each piece should be everywhere known by its unalterable number, so that in discussion and writing about art Number so-and-so of the school collection should be as recognised a piece as the numbered Sonata of a great composer.[1] Farther, as in the natural history collections inferior specimens, so in these art collections duplicate copies of the prints, casts, and photographs should be kept for close examination and free use: many private persons would gladly contribute from their stores for such purpose when once they knew what was wanted; while reflectively the importance attached to the authoritative examples chosen for the main school collection, would make private persons interested and eager in the possession of the same, and would act strictly as a teacher in every household.

34. Then for crown to this established series, whatever was obtainable of good painting, sculpture, and decorative art ought to be exhibited in a beautiful and attractive way; but only what was good and beautiful. I would insist much on this principle of severe selection—one good piece of art is a school in itself; surround it by a dozen of bad ones, and it becomes useless. There's a Turner drawing of the Yorkshire Series in the Kensington Collection—Hornby Castle.[2] Put that in a small room by itself, and draw the

[1] [So Ruskin preaches also in a footnote to one of his Oxford Catalogues (*Catalogue of Examples, 1870*, Educational Series, No. 23); but he did not practise the virtue—as the reader of the Bibliographical Notes to those Catalogues will perceive (Vol. XX.).]

[2] [No. 88 (included in the Sheepshanks Gift); for another reference to it, see Vol. XIII. p. 590.]

Digitized by Google

student's attention to it as a wholly precious thing, and it will teach all water-colour drawing from beginning to end; and in subject—all tree drawing, all mountain drawing, all principles of light, shade, and colour—you want nothing more than that one work. But it hangs now in a corner surrounded by a mass of rubbish, and I never saw a human creature look at it yet, unless I dragged them up to it, nor do I believe it possible for a student to enter the room at all but at risk of getting harm done to his eye and taste. I cannot forbear, with respect to the purification and vivifying of our school museums, here mentioning with entire thankfulness and congratulation—the first to the doers of the work, and the second to the students of Oxford—what has just been done in this kind by the Curators of the Taylor Buildings—the Dean of Christ Church, Professor Rawlinson, Dr. Acland. The collection there, though including some of the most important first-class drawings in Europe, was, until lately, rendered practically useless, because they were encumbered with inferior work and exhibited in an unsightly manner. All the bad drawings have now been removed into other parts of the Museum, and the precious ones have been in a sightly and graceful way arranged in three rooms —one devoted to Michael Angelo, one to Raphael, one to Turner—and I know that thus the drawings, of which at present the collection exists, will have most vital influence on education in the University; nor do I doubt that the unselfish possessors of valuable pictures, little seen in their private galleries, and who may be desirous of making them more publicly serviceable, will henceforward feel that they could not appoint for them any more honourable or more conspicuously useful position than they would occupy in the Gallery of Oxford.[1]

[1] [The University Galleries in the Taylor Building have been again somewhat rearranged since Ruskin wrote this lecture. His prediction of private benefactions has been partly fulfilled by the notable bequest of Pre-Raphaelite pictures formerly in the collection of Mr. T. Combe. A few months later than this lecture, Ruskin was sounded on his willingness to become a Curator of the Galleries: see above, Introduction, p. xxxiv.]

Digitized by Google

35. And now, lastly, we come to the National Gallery or Museum of Art—the Treasury and Storehouse, not the school; respecting which the great law should be that while everything was perfectly accessible to the persons who really needed sight and use of it, nothing should be exhibited to the public confusedly and vainly merely for the sake of showing it was there, but that all the most precious possessions should be exhibited with every beautiful accompaniment and accessory that could either do them honour or prepare the temper of the spectator for their meaning. Your National Gallery must be a stately place—a true Palace of Art, pure in the style of it indeed, and, as far as thought can reach, removed from grossness or excess of ornament, but not unsumptuous, especially precious in material and exquisite in workmanship, and having the places of all its chief possessions unalterably decided upon, so that they can be at once treated with right harmony of effect. Classification, in a National Gallery, should be boldly kept subordinate to the convenience of finding a thing where you expect it to be, and in a place which becomes it. I don't care what the connection of things is, so only that they be not kept for years in dark corridors or plank outhouses. Build beautiful rooms for what you have got, let the things take up their abode therein, and when you get anything else like them, build another room for that, and don't disturb what you have already.

36. Therefore, while a National Gallery should always be stately and lovely, it should not be limited by symmetries of plan.[1] It should look, in a word, what it is—a gallery, capable of being extended without limit in any convenient direction; and as in any great metropolis it may be assumed that ground is valuable, a National Gallery may always advisably consist of three stories—the lowest for sculpture, the second for the libraries and prints, the third, lighted from above, and, where needful, laterally also, for the paintings,

[1] [Compare Ruskin's own scheme for a "labyrinthine" Turner Gallery: Vol. XIII. p. xxviii.]

Digitized by Google

vases, gems, and coins. And these three stories might, in the external design, bear to each other somewhat the relations of the nave arches, triforium, and cloister of a cathedral; or, if the design were Italian, might be beautifully proportioned in any convenient dimensions. Design the walls or arches of such an elevation gracefully for two compartments, and you may prolong the same design for miles, if you need it, and find it more beautiful and impressive as it is extended. I should myself desire to see it built or inlaid with some beautifully coloured and fine stone—Cornish or Genoa serpentine, or any kind of grey or green marble, with string-courses of white marble and bearing shafts of porphyry—or else carved niches of white marble, containing statues; but it is of no use saying what would be desirable—for I know that it will never be done—nor saying where it should be built neither, for there it assuredly never will be built.

87. It may easily be seen where it should be built. The reach of the river from Westminster to Vauxhall is a disgrace to the metropolis; it might be, and should be, its chief beauty. Subscribe only once for all as much money as you spend annually in gunpowder and cannon cast only to burst. Think what an absurd thing it is that you cannot do this. Think what you would say of the wits of a private gentleman who could not once for all spend as much in building his picture gallery as he spent every year in experimenting on the fastenings of his shutters.[1] That's the real state of our national wits. Take the cost of a year's fireworks—take fifteen millions boldly out of your pocket, knock down the penitentiary at Pimlico,[2] and send your beloved criminals to be penitent out of sight somewhere, clear away the gasometers on that side, and the bone-boilers on the other, lay out a line of gardens

[1] [Compare Vol. XVIII. p. 438.]

[2] [Thirty years after Ruskin wrote this was done; and the "National Gallery of British Art," built by Sir Henry Tate, now stands on the site of the Millbank Penitentiary at Pimlico.]

Digitized by Google

from Lambeth Palace to Vauxhall Bridge on the south side of the river, and on this, build a National Gallery of Porphyry and white marble, reaching that mile long from Westminster to Vauxhall Bridge, and I only wish it may be pretty enough and rich enough for the French to want to come and steal it.

38. Of course this will not be done, nor can anything be proposed that ought to be done, but with an air of mockery. For indeed—and this was one of the principal things I went down to say at Cambridge — the limits of all technical education and, secondly, the mode and limits of this general art instruction must be physically determined by the conditions of national life of which we may anticipate the general and final adoption.[1]

It will be soon now perceived that the competition of nations with each other's trade, and their admiring emulation of each other's skill, is no logical, nor in the end admissible, consequence of our enlarged ideas respecting freedom of commerce. It will be found that the division of labour among different races is just as wise and necessary as the division of it among individuals, and that a time comes in the life of a people, as in that of a youth, when it is imperatively necessary for it to choose its profession. And if the final determination of the English people[2] be that it will live by mixed trading and by digging of iron,[3] no one need ask any farther questions respecting its art-education. Even supposing that it could be raised into unanimity of such heroic resolution as that instead of digging iron for the rest of the world, some inferior race in that world should dig iron for it, and that for its own part as a people it would live, whether a small or great multitude, in pure air, on clean earth, and by labour of

[1] [See the preceding lecture.]

[2] [For similar passages on the Future of England, see Vol. VII. p. 425; Vol. XVII. p. 326; and Vol. XVIII. p. 134.]

[3] [Here Ruskin first wrote ". . . that it will consist mainly of a company of pedlars and ironmongers purchasing occasional emancipation into the higher character of sportsmen or gamesters, no one need . . ."]

Digitized by Google

its intellect, no less than of its hands; supposing this possible—which at present it is not—the political and physical questions needing painful decision in the struggle for immediate life would for a long period render this business of its art instruction a quite inferior and inconsiderable one.[1]

A LETTER ON THE BRITISH MUSEUM[2]

[The following is the letter to the Editor of the *Times* referred to above, § 27, p. 219:—]

SIR,—As I see in your impression of yesterday that my name was introduced in support of some remarks made, at the meeting of the Society of Arts, on the management of the British Museum,[3] and as the tendency of the remarks I refer to was depreciatory of the efforts and aims of several officers of the Museum—more especially of the work done on the collection of minerals by my friend Mr. Nevil S. Maskelyne[4]—you will, I hope, permit me, not having been present at the meeting, to express my feeling on the subject briefly in your columns.

---

[1] [The MS. continues:—

> "There are indeed some measures instantly in our power and in all cases desirable, and of which the effect could not but be in the meanwhile for good. These I will briefly name, consisting mainly all of"—

and there the MS. breaks off. The last page of it is headed "Cambridge," showing that this was a passage in some earlier draft of the Rede lecture (see above, p. 188 *n.*). It will be observed that the present lecture thus comes to an end without the customary peroration. It appears, however, from the report of the lecture in the *Daily Telegraph* that "the speaker concluded by a few general suggestions as to what features are desirable in a National Gallery, most of which he did not read, but left for publication in the *Proceedings* of the Institution." No report of the lecture ultimately appeared in the *Proceedings*, and Ruskin never revised the lecture for publication.]

[2] [From the *Times*, January 27, 1866. Reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 78–81.]

[3] [At the meeting of the Society, in the Hall, Adelphi, Lord Henry Lennox read a paper on "The Uses of National Museums to Local Institutions," in which he spoke of Ruskin's suggestions "adopted and recommended to Parliament in annual reports, and in obedience to distinct Commissions," as having been unwarrantably disregarded since 1858. See Ruskin's official report on the Turner Bequest, printed in Vol. XIII. p. 319.]

[4] [Professor Nevil Story-Maskelyne (afterwards M.P. for the Cricklade Division) was then Keeper of Mineralogy at the Museum. The Natural History collections had not yet been removed to the separate Museum at South Kensington. He was also Professor of Mineralogy at Oxford: see *Eagle's Nest*, § 160.]

Digitized by Google

There is a confused notion in the existing public mind that the British Museum is partly a parish school . . .[1]

For all those who can use the existing national collection to any purpose, the Catalogue[2] as it now stands is amply sufficient: it would be difficult to conceive a more serviceable one. But the rapidly progressive state of (especially mineralogical) science, renders it impossible for the Curators to make their arrangements in all points satisfactory, or for long periods permanent. It is just because Mr. Maskelyne is doing more active, continual, and careful work than, as far as I know, is at present done in any national museum in Europe—because he is completing gaps in the present series by the intercalation of carefully sought specimens, and accurately reforming its classification by recently corrected analyses—that the collection cannot yet fall into the formal and placid order in which an indolent Curator would speedily arrange and willingly leave it.

I am glad that Lord H. Lennox referred to the passage in my report on the Turner Collection in which I recommended that certain portions of that great series should be distributed, for permanence, among our leading provincial towns.[3] But I had rather see the whole Turner collection buried, not merely in the cellars of the National Gallery, but with Prospero's staff fathoms in the earth,[4] than that it should be the means of inaugurating the fatal custom of carrying great works of art about the roads for a show. If you *must* make them educational to the public, hang Titian's Bacchus up for a vintner's sign, and give Henry VI.'s Psalter[5] for a spelling-book to the Bluecoat School; but, at least, hang the one from a permanent post, and chain the other to the boys' desks, and do not send them about in caravans to every annual Bartholomew Fair.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. Ruskin.

Denmark Hill, *Jan.* 26.

[1] [As above, p. 219.]

[2] [Mr. Nevil Story-Maskelyne's description of the minerals occupied pp. 39–51 of the *Guide to the Exhibition Rooms of the Departments of Natural History and Antiquities*, 1866.]

[3] [See Vol. XIII. p. 324; and compare the similar recommendation with regard to the "Outlines of John Leech," in the letter on that subject (Vol. XIV. p. 332).]

[4] [*Tempest*, Act v. sc. 1, 55.]

[5] [For Ruskin's many other references to Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne" (No. 35 in the National Gallery), see General Index. Henry VI.'s Psalter is in the British Museum ("Domitian A. 17," in the Cottonian Catalogue). It is of early fifteenth-century work, and was executed in England by a French artist for the then youthful king, from whom it takes its name. For another reference to it, see *Lectures on Landscape*, § 77.]

Digitized by Google

VI

"FAIRY STORIES"

A PREFACE TO "GERMAN POPULAR STORIES"

(1868)

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This essay was first printed in a work with the following title:—

> German | Popular | Stories. | With Illustrations | after the original designs of George Cruikshank. | Edited by Edgar Taylor. | A New Edition, | With Introduction by John Ruskin, M.A. | London: | John Camden Hotten, Piccadilly. | 1869.

Octavo, pp. xxviii.+335. Issued in cloth boards, price 6s. 6d. Also some large-paper copies, with the plates printed in brown ink, at 21s.; and a few with India proofs, at 3s. 6d.

The volume was a reprint of two series of "German Popular Stories" (translated from the brothers Grimm), issued, with Cruikshank's illustrations, in 1823 and 1826. The reprint, with Ruskin's Introduction, has been frequently re-issued. The publisher in an "Advertisement" said: "I had at first thought of reproducing it in two volumes the same size as the originals; but it was Mr. Ruskin's wish that the new edition should appeal to young readers rather than to adults, and the present convenient form was decided upon." Ruskin's Introduction occupies pp. v.–xiv.

The Introduction was reprinted in 1885 in *On the Old Road*, under the heading "Fairy Stories," vol. ii. pp. 167–176 (§§ 124–130), and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. iii. pp. 170–179 (§§ 124–130). The paragraphs are here re-numbered. The spaces between sentences or paragraphs follow the original setting.]

Digitized by Google

FAIRY STORIES

[1868]

1. LONG since, longer ago perhaps than the opening of some fairy tales, I was asked by the publisher[1] who has been rash enough, at my request, to reprint these my favourite old stories[2] in their earliest English form, to set down for him my reasons for preferring them to the more polished legends, moral and satiric, which are now, with rich adornment of every page by very admirable art, presented to the acceptance of the Nursery.

But it seemed to me to matter so little to the majestic independence of the child-public, who, beside themselves, liked, or who disliked, what they pronounced entertaining, that it is only on strict claims of a promise unwarily given that I venture on the impertinence of eulogy; and my reluctance is the greater, because there is in fact nothing very notable in these tales, unless it be their freedom from faults which for some time have been held to be quite the reverse of faults, by the majority of readers.

2. In the best stories recently written for the young, there is a taint which it is not easy to define, but which inevitably follows on the author's addressing himself to children bred in school-rooms and drawing-rooms, instead of fields and woods—children whose favourite amusements are premature imitations of the vanities of elder people, and whose conceptions of beauty are dependent partly on

[1] [Mr. J. C. Hotten: see Bibliographical Note.]
[2] [For Ruskin's early reading of Grimm and his copying of Cruikshank's illustrations (first published in 1823 and 1826), see *Præterita*, i. § 82.]

Digitized by Google

costliness of dress. The fairies who interfere in the fortunes of these little ones are apt to be resplendent chiefly in millinery and satin slippers, and appalling more by their airs than their enchantments.

The fine satire which, gleaming through every playful word, renders some of these recent stories as attractive to the old as to the young, seems to me no less to unfit them for their proper function. Children should laugh, but not mock; and when they laugh, it should not be at the weaknesses or faults of others. They should be taught, as far as they are permitted to concern themselves with the characters of those around them, to seek faithfully for good, not to lie in wait maliciously to make themselves merry with evil: they should be too painfully sensitive to wrong, to smile at it; and too modest to constitute themselves its judges.

8. With these minor errors a far graver one is involved. As the simplicity of the sense of beauty has been lost in recent tales for children, so also the simplicity of their conception of love. That word which, in the heart of a child, should represent the most constant and vital part of its being; which ought to be the sign of the most solemn thoughts that inform its awakening soul and, in one wide mystery of pure sunrise, should flood the zenith of its heaven, and gleam on the dew at its feet; this word, which should be consecrated on its lips, together with the Name which it may not take in vain, and whose meaning should soften and animate every emotion through which the inferior things and the feeble creatures, set beneath it in its narrow world, are revealed to its curiosity or companionship;—this word, in modern child-story, is too often restrained and darkened into the hieroglyph of an evil mystery, troubling the sweet peace of youth with premature gleams of uncomprehended passion, and flitting shadows of unrecognized sin.

Digitized by Google

4. These grave faults in the spirit of recent child-fiction are connected with a parallel folly of purpose. Parents who are too indolent and self-indulgent to form their children's characters by wholesome discipline, or in their own habits and principles of life are conscious of setting before them no faultless example, vainly endeavour to substitute the persuasive influence of moral precept, intruded in the guise of amusement, for the strength of moral habit compelled by righteous authority:—vainly think to inform the heart of infancy with deliberative wisdom, while they abdicate the guardianship of its unquestioning innocence; and warp into the agonies of an immature philosophy of conscience the once fearless strength of its unsullied and unhesitating virtue.

A child should not need to choose between right and wrong. It should not be capable of wrong; it should not conceive of wrong. Obedient, as bark to helm, not by sudden strain or effort, but in the freedom of its bright course of constant life; true, with an undistinguished, painless, unboastful truth, in a crystalline household world of truth; gentle, through daily entreatings of gentleness, and honourable trusts, and pretty prides of child-fellowship in offices of good; strong, not in bitter and doubtful contest with temptation, but in peace of heart, and armour of habitual right, from which temptation falls like thawing hail; self-commanding, not in sick restraint of mean appetites and covetous thoughts, but in vital joy of unluxurious life, and contentment in narrow possession, wisely esteemed.

Children so trained have no need of moral fairy tales; but they will find in the apparently vain and fitful courses of any tradition of old time, honestly delivered to them, a teaching for which no other can be substituted, and of which the power cannot be measured; animating for them the material world with inextinguishable life, fortifying them

Digitized by Google

against the glacial cold of selfish science, and preparing them submissively, and with no bitterness of astonishment, to behold, in later years, the mystery—divinely appointed to remain such to all human thought—of the fates that happen alike to the evil and the good.

5. And the effect of the endeavour to make stories moral upon the literary merit of the work itself, is as harmful as the motive of the effort is false. For every fairy tale worth recording at all is the remnant of a tradition possessing true historical value;[1]—historical, at least, in so far as it has naturally arisen out of the mind of a people under special circumstances, and risen not without meaning, nor removed altogether from their sphere of religious faith. It sustains afterwards natural changes from the sincere action of the fear or fancy of successive generations; it takes new colour from their manner of life, and new form from their changing moral tempers. As long as these changes are natural and effortless, accidental and inevitable, the story remains essentially true, altering its form, indeed, like a flying cloud, but remaining a sign of the sky; a shadowy image, as truly a part of the great firmament of the human mind as the light of reason which it seems to interrupt. But the fair deceit and innocent error of it cannot be interpreted nor restrained by a wilful purpose, and all additions to it by art do but defile, as the shepherd disturbs the flakes of morning mist with smoke from his fire of dead leaves.

6. There is also a deeper collateral mischief in this indulgence of licentious change and retouching of stories to suit particular tastes, or inculcate favourite doctrines. It directly destroys the child's power of rendering any such belief as it would otherwise have been in his nature to give to an imaginative vision. How far it is expedient to

[1] [Compare the opening pages of the *Queen of the Air*.]

Digitized by Google

occupy his mind with ideal forms at all may be questionable to many, though not to me; but it is quite beyond question that if we do allow of the fictitious representation, that representation should be calm and complete, possessed to the full, and read down its utmost depth. The little reader's attention should never be confused or disturbed, whether he is possessing himself of fairy tale or history. Let him know his fairy tale accurately, and have perfect joy or awe in the conception of it as if it were real; thus he will always be exercising his power of grasping realities: but a confused, careless, and discrediting tenure of the fiction will lead to as confused and careless reading of fact. Let the circumstances of both be strictly perceived, and long dwelt upon, and let the child's own mind develop fruit of thought from both. It is of the greatest importance early to secure this habit of contemplation, and therefore it is a grave error, either to multiply unnecessarily, or to illustrate with extravagant richness, the incidents presented to the imagination. It should multiply and illustrate them for itself; and, if the intellect is of any real value, there will be a mystery and wonderfulness in its own dreams which would only be thwarted by external illustration. Yet I do not bring forward the text or the etchings in this volume as examples of what either ought to be in works of the kind: they are in many respects common, imperfect, vulgar; but their vulgarity is of a wholesome and harmless kind. It is not, for instance, graceful English, to say that a thought "popped into Catherine's head"; but it nevertheless is far better, as an initiation into literary style, that a child should be told this than that "a subject attracted Catherine's attention." And in genuine forms of minor tradition, a rude and more or less illiterate tone will always be discernible; for all the best fairy tales have owed their birth, and the greater part of their power, to narrowness of social circumstances; they belong properly to districts in which walled cities are surrounded by bright and unblemished country, and in which a healthy and

Digitized by Google

bustling town life, not highly refined, is relieved by, and contrasted with, the calm enchantment of pastoral and woodland scenery, either under humble cultivation by peasant masters, or left in its natural solitude. Under conditions of this kind the imagination is enough excited to invent instinctively, (and rejoice in the invention of) spiritual forms of wildness and beauty, while yet it is restrained and made cheerful by the familiar accidents and relations of town life, mingling always in its fancy humorous and vulgar circumstances with pathetic ones, and never so much impressed with its supernatural phantasies as to be in danger of retaining them as any part of its religious faith. The good spirit descends gradually from an angel into a fairy, and the demon shrinks into a playful grotesque of diminutive malevolence, while yet both keep an accredited and vital influence upon the character and mind. But the language in which such ideas will be usually clothed must necessarily partake of their narrowness; and art is systematically incognizant of them, having only strength under the conditions which awake them to express itself in an irregular and gross grotesque, fit only for external architectural decoration.

7. The illustrations of this volume are almost the only exceptions I know to the general rule. They are of quite sterling and admirable art, in a class precisely parallel in elevation to the character of the tales which they illustrate; and the original etchings, as I have before said in the Appendix to my *Elements of Drawing*,[1] were unrivalled in masterfulness of touch since Rembrandt; (in some qualities of delineation unrivalled even by him). These copies have been so carefully executed that at first I was deceived by them, and supposed them to be late impressions from the plates (and what is more, I believe the master himself was deceived by them, and supposed them

[1] [Vol. XV. p. 222.]

Digitized by Google

to be his own); and although, on careful comparison with the first proofs, they will be found no exception to the terrible law that literal repetition of entirely fine work shall be, even to the hand that produced it,—much more to any other,—for ever impossible, they still represent, with sufficient fidelity to be in the highest degree instructive, the harmonious light and shade, the manly simplicity of execution, and the easy, unencumbered fancy, of designs which belonged to the best period of Cruikshank's genius.[1] To make somewhat enlarged copies of them, looking at them through a magnifying-glass, and never putting two lines where Cruikshank has put only one, would be an exercise in decision and severe drawing which would leave afterwards little to be learnt in schools. I would gladly also say much in their praise as imaginative designs; but the power of genuine imaginative work, and its difference from that which is compounded and patched together from borrowed sources, is of all qualities of art the most difficult to explain; and I must be content with the simple assertion of it.

And so I trust the good old book, and the honest work that adorns it, to such favour as they may find with children of open hearts and lowly lives.

DENMARK HILL, *Easter*, 1868.

[1] [For Ruskin's regret at the later direction of the artist's powers, see above, p. 77.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

VII

THE FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE

OF THE

VALLEY OF THE SOMME

(1869)

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—The lecture on "The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme" has not hitherto been published (see above, Introduction, p. xxi.). A few extracts from a MS. report of it (§ 1, and a passage in § 24) were, however, given in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of August 10, 1886; in an article entitled "On the Way to Switzerland."

The Catalogue, here appended to the lecture (pp. 269–277), has appeared in two editions:[1]—

First Edition (1869).—An octavo pamphlet of 12 pages (issued sewn and without wrappers), with the following title on p. 1:—

> *References to the Series of Paintings and* | *Sketches, from Mr. Ruskin's Collection,* | *Shown in Illustration of the Relations of* | *Flamboyant Architecture to Contemporary* | *and Subsequent Art,* | at the | Evening Meeting of the Royal Institution, | Friday, January 29th, 1869. | London: Queen Street Printing Office. | 1869.

Page 2 is blank; pp. 3–11 contain the notes; p. 12 is blank. In this edition Nos. 34 and 35 were omitted.

Second Edition (1869).—In this edition the title on p. 1 was different. The words "at the Evening . . . 1869" were omitted, and the words "References . . . Subsequent Art" were placed lower on the page. Pages 3–8 were the same. On p. 9 Nos. 34 and 35 were added, and this caused pp. 9–11 to be overrun. Otherwise the two editions are identical. In this edition, in No. 9, "Can" before "Mastino" has been omitted.]

[1] Only ed. 2 is noted in the *Bibliography* by Wise and Smart.

Digitized by Google

THE FLAMBOYANT ARCHITECTURE

OF THE

VALLEY OF THE SOMME

(*A Lecture at the Royal Institution, January* 29, 1869)

1. You stopped at the brow of the hill to put the drag on, and looked up to see where you were:—and there lay beneath you, far as eye could reach on either side, this wonderful valley of the Somme,—with line on line of tufted aspen and tall poplar, making the blue distances more exquisite in bloom by the gleam of their leaves; and in the midst of it, by the glittering of the divided streams of its river, lay the clustered mossy roofs of Abbeville,[1] like a purple flake of cloud, with the precipitous mass of the Cathedral towers rising mountainous through them, and here and there, in the midst of them, spaces of garden close set with pure green trees, bossy and perfect. So you trotted down the hill between bright chalk banks, with a cottage or two nestled into their recesses, and little round children rolling about like apples before the doors, and at the bottom you came into a space of open park ground, divided by stately avenues of chestnut and acacia,—with long banks of outwork and massive walls of bastion seen beyond—then came the hollow thunder of the drawbridge and shadow of the gate—and in an instant, you were in the gay street of a populous yet peaceful city—a fellowship of ancient houses set beside each other, with all the active companionship of business and sociableness of old friends,

[1] [For other descriptions of Abbeville, see *Poems*, describing a visit in 1835 (Vol. II. p. 398); and *Præterita*, i. ch. ix. §§ 177 *seq.*]

Digitized by Google

and yet each with the staid and self-possessed look of country houses surrounded by hereditary fields—or country cottages nested in forgotten glens,—each with its own character and fearlessly independent ways—its own steep gable, narrow or wide—its special little peaked windows set this way and that as the fancy took them,—its most particular odd corners, and outs and ins of wall to make the most of the ground and sunshine,—its own turret staircase, in the inner angle of the courtyard,—its own designs and fancies in carving of bracket and beam—its own only bridge over the clear branchlet of the Somme that rippled at its garden gate.[1]

2. All that's gone,—and most of Abbeville is like most

[1] [Among the MSS. of this lecture are some passages which show that Ruskin at first intended to take his hearers more leisurely to Abbeville. He begins at the ford of *Blanche Tache* over the estuary of the Somme (where Edward III. crossed the river on his way to Crécy, and near St. Valery-sur-Somme, whence William the Conqueror set sail), and tells a legend connected with Hugh Capet, whose right to the throne

> ". . . was most impressively manifested according to all tradition in the recovery of the body of St. Valery from its place of concealment at Montreuil. Hugo in person conducted the army which compelled its restitution from the Flemings, and either he himself or, [according] to other reports, the Count Bernard as his representative bearing the urn containing the relics, marched at the head of an immense multitude singing hymns from Montreuil to the ford of Somme. And as they reached the edge of the water—so ran for ages afterwards the popular tale—behold instantly the tide of the sea rose so high that it overflowed every channel and forbade the passage of the ford. Whereupon the Count Bernard making all the people kneel on the shore and praying for help, the water divided in the midst, and left free a wide path from one to the other shore, which all the people having traversed in great joy and wonder, the sea returned again to its place.
>
> "Well, from Blanche Tache the train will carry you for ten minutes through a piece of flat country entirely uninteresting, unless you care to look on your right for the aspen poplars which border the canals of the Somme between Abbeville and the sea. I suppose in Holland there may be something to match that canal and its avenue, but I have never seen their like yet; two perfectly healthy and unbroken ranks of lovely trees, on each side of a flowing stream, broad and straight as an arrow for five miles. Fancy the aisle of a cathedral five miles long, with a river for the pavement of it. It goes away into a point of blue light, like a little firefly. Of course you can't see anything of it from the railroad except here and there a few of its taller trees with their sides to you, but it would be worth while stopping at the next station to see [them], if there were nothing else to see. Something else there is, however; when you feel the train begin to go more slowly, look out forward on the left hand and you will see two massy square towers—which are still, and may be for a few months more—dark with the grand grey of age."]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Market Place, Abbeville
(1868)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

of London—rows of houses, all alike, with an heap of brickbats at the end of it. But St. Vulfran is still left, and it and the other churches have this special interest—they are the last of their race. The last—that is a bold word, and one which I would not press too far in the implied absoluteness of its negation. I don't mean that you may not by close search find here and there a fragment of good Gothic later than St. Vulfran of Abbeville, but I do mean that there is no other important building, nor even an unimportant one of beauty, belonging to the true Gothic school, and of later date than this. Roughly, it belongs to the last quarter of the fifteenth century,—1475 to 1500—and the Gothic of Flanders was hopelessly corrupt fifty years before that, the Gothic of Italy had given way to classicalism a hundred years before, and the Gothic spirit of England, though not yet dead, was fastened down and helpless under stern geometrical construction,[1] and frigid law of vertical line, so that it is walled up like a condemned nun, and you cannot see it die. But here, in France, it passes away in your sight; driven from all other scenes of its ancient power, it came to this narrow valley of the Somme, and passed away.

3. I have no doubt that if any architects are present, they are shocked at my calling this pure. Not ten buildings in the world, pure: Verona tombs grand, but not pure; Giotto's Gothic, not pure; our Early English is thin and cut to pieces in its mouldings. Gothic is developed, in one form young, and in another old. This is not central Gothic, but it is still *altogether* Gothic,—florid, but still essential, coherent. While, as I said, the Flemish is corrupt, and the English both corrupt and dead, here [it is] living and in all essential character incorrupt, while the Spire of Antwerp is only a Renaissance building in the shape of a Gothic one.

4. Now are you not inclined to ask, in the presence of

[1] [For Ruskin's dislike of English Perpendicular, see Vol. VIII. p. 108; and Vol. IX. p. 227.]

Digitized by Google

this last fragment of a series of beautiful human work that had lasted through five hundred years,—how it came to pass that in this [place] it perished?—what was the meaning of its fate?—by what power it had risen?—by what fault it fell?

Now, observe:—this is a most strangely complex question. Gothic architecture perished before two great influences,—the Reformation, and the revival of literature. We usually think of those influences as allied,—but they were not allied at all.

5. The Reformation was an illiterate movement—it was the rising of ignorant persons, who had been deceived, against the arts that had deceived them; its immediate tendency was to destroy Gothic as an art, with all the fine arts. But revived literature rose against it as not fine enough art. It destroyed Gothic, because it thought it had found something better than Gothic. These two adversaries were directly opposed,—they attacked from opposite flanks, and were as hostile to each other as to what they destroyed. Now,—you see—here is one most interesting question. Suppose these enemies had not attacked together. Suppose Luther had attacked it alone, on one flank, and Raphael alone, on the other. Suppose you had had reformation over Europe,—confiscation of priests' revenues in Rome as well as in England,—an Elizabeth on the throne of Madrid and a Cromwell at the gates of the Vatican. What form would the arts then have taken, as the Gothic expired? Or on the other hand,—suppose you had had Classic literature revived without religious reformation, and that a still imperious and fervid Catholicism had built its temples to the Madonna,—its shrines to the Saints,—at Whitby and Tynemouth—at Bolton and Melrose—on the dust of their despised aisles,—in the form of the temples of the Lacinian Juno[1] and the Ephesian Diana,—

[1] [The Lacinian promontory had a celebrated temple of Juno (see *Æneid*, iii. 552), some remains of which are still standing and give the spot its modern name, Capo della Colonne.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

St. Vulfran, Abbeville; from the East

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

what would have been the course of art, and human thought then? You see how interesting this double question would be,—and how carefully we must distinguish the effect of a popular emotion which broke down images because it hated images, from one which removed them only to make them fairer and more like heathen gods. And again,—how careful to distinguish a movement which destroyed legendary art because it detested legend, from a movement which no longer needed legendary art because its legends could now be in books instead of pictures.

6. But both these questions, interesting as they are, are subordinate to a greater one. Suppose either, or both, of those adversaries had risen against Gothic two centuries earlier, and that printing had been discovered, and classic literature revived, in the reign of Saint Louis. Quite easily that might have chanced. There was nothing to hinder it in the nature of things,—and in that case, the two adversaries would have attacked the Gothic in youth, and met the main rush of its power. What would have happened then? Well, I can tell you what would have happened. That would have taken place universally, which did take place partially in the leading minds of the thirteenth century. The strong Gothic would have received the classical element everywhere, as it did at Florence. That architecture of Florence did receive classical forms, as the mind of Dante received classical legends, incorporating them with its own life, and making that life more varied and more vivid. But in the sixteenth century the Gothic itself was dying[1]—the stock of the tree was rotten to its root, no grafting was any more possible on any branch of it. It sank at the first touch of the axe; and a new thing was planted instead of it, foreign to the soil, and which will never flourish there. Therefore, what I have to show you to-night is the form of this Christian architecture in its last time—not yet dead—but with its hours numbered, and

[1] [Compare *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 98.]

Digitized by Google

numbered not by an enemy's will, but by its own weakness,—not by external calamity, but by native corruption.

7. And, first, I have just used the expression—by what faults it fell.

. . . . . .[1]

8. Now I know you partly recognize the truth of this as I speak it. But you may do away with all doubt, by putting the question home to yourselves, before any work of art—nay, before even the feeblest copy or shadow of a work—of any Central Greek or Italian School. This evening, I have put in the next room two pictures,[2] one by Titian, the other a study from Luini, which, however feeble, being patiently wrought on the spot, as far as possible in facsimile, conveys to you a better impression than an ordinary engraving could, of a work in itself so beautiful that I do not fear but that you will find some reflex of its true character, even in this its shadow. Stand for a few moments to-night before those pictures, and ask of yourselves whether men and women such as they represent were trained in a vicious or degraded element, and whether the painters who could understand them and rejoice in making their nobleness eternal, saw them with eyes warped by evil, or painted them with hands enfeebled by guilt. The Venetian picture should be especially interesting to us English, for it is the portrait of a Merchant King. Sismondi[3] says of him: "Gritti, one of the merchants whom the Turks had arrested at Constantinople in the beginning of their quarrel with Venice, conducted from his prison the negotiations in the name of his country; fortune having destined this man, no less distinguished for the beauty of

[1] [The passage, which here followed in the lecture, was detached by Ruskin for use in *The Queen of the Air*, §§ 102–105: see below, pp. 389–392, where he says the passage "will be better read than in its incidental connection with the porches of Abbeville." It shows that "the faults of a work are the faults of its workmen," great art being "the expression in form of the mind of a great man."]

[2] [Nos. 1 and 2 in the Catalogue following the lecture (below, p. 269). The Titian is Plate X. here; for the Luini, see the Frontispiece and Introduction, pp. lxxii.-lxxiv.]

[3] [*Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Âge*, ed. 1826, vol. xiii. p. 239. Gritti was Doge, 1523–1538.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Photo by Miss Marshall

Allen & Co. Sc.

The Doge Andrea Gritti

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

his face, and the strength of his person, than for his military and political genius, to conclude from the midst of his captivity two of the most important treaties ever signed by the state; and afterwards signalizing himself in the war of the league of Cambrai, and reconciling his country to France, he mounted the Ducal throne and held it through fifteen years;"—reigned,—the historian ought to have added —in brightness of honour, and strengthened by the affection and the trust of every heart in Venice.

9. There are three more pictures in the other room which will mark for you in a distinct manner the connection of national character with modes of work. The Meissonier[1] especially deserves your attention, as one of the most laboured pieces that have yet come from his hand,—and its execution is as surely indicative of the accomplished, subtle, and worldly force of the French Schools, as the country boys of Hunt[2] testify to the simple and cheerful energy of a rustic English mind. In all first-rate work character is thus legible at a glance, but in the plurality of instances, and of schools, a thousand varied modes of failure or merit mark the mingling of broken moral powers. So that it is no more possible to pronounce in a word the praise or blame of an art than of a nation. Mixed of evil and good,—nor even these themselves always as such definable, but the evil atoned for, till it seems worthy of love, and the good thoughtless or thwarted till it is all in vain —the inventions, like the arts of men, shine but with an interrupted lustre, and, like the fair colours of birds' plumage, changing as we change our place, in one light glow and in another fade.

10. The common sense of it all is, that no man is perfect: commonly the best kind of man is liable to bad flaws and failures,—all the more notable for the rest of the good in him. Especially the men of a delicate make;—

[1] [No. 3 in the Catalogue (p. 269).]
[2] [No. 4, p. 269. The last of the "three other pictures" mentioned in the text was the "Cottage Interior" by Frère: No. 5, p. 270.]

Digitized by Google

Raphael, Vandyke, Mozart, and all the men of their order. Then the people who think character has nothing to do with art, say: "Look, here's a great painter, and he did so and so." Well—whatever he did of wrong shortened his powers, and whatever he resisted of wrong strengthened them. All the good in him came of the good at the root, and all the bad, of the bad at the root. Ask of a man always whether there's any good in him, and take what you find fearlessly, knowing that the grape never came of the thorn, nor the fig of the thistle. By their fruits ye shall know them.[1]

11. Therefore in reading this architecture, you will read infallibly the faults of its builders. And yet you must observe carefully that the higher arts, which involve the action of the whole intellect, tell the story of the entire national character; but the constructive and mechanical arts tell only part. From a nation's painting, you know everything concerning it; from a nation's architecture, only half. That portrait of Andrea Gritti by Titian tells you everything essential to be known about the power of Venice in his day—the breed of her race, their self-command, their subtlety, their courage, their refinement of sensitive faculty, and their noble methods of work. So,—if you go to the Kensington Museum,—everything that needs to be known, nay, the deepest things that can ever be known, of England a hundred years ago, are written in two pictures of Reynolds': the Age of Innocence, and the young Colonel mounting his horse.[2] Carlyle and Froude and Macaulay all together cannot tell you as much as those two bits of canvas will when you have once learned to read them.

12. So we proceed to read this bit of work[3] as well

[1] [Matthew vii. 16. On the subject of art and character, see above, p. 165.]

[2] [Both now in the National Gallery. For other references to the "Age of Innocence" (No. 307), see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 125, and *Art of England*, § 66. The "young Colonel mounting his horse" is the "Portrait of Captain Orme" (No. 681).]

[3] [*i.e.*, St. Vulfran at Abbeville, of which there were drawings shown in the lecture room: see Catalogue, pp. 276, 277.]

Digitized by Google

as we can. Well—first there are its more physical and material qualities. What is it made of—built of? That's the first thing to ask of all building. Egyptian building is essentially of porphyry,—Greek of marble,—St. Mark's at Venice of glass and alabaster,—and this is—built of chalk, common chalk—chalk with the flints in it left in, and sticking out here and there. Well, that's the first point to think about. All flamboyant architecture is essentially chalk architecture,—it is built of some light, soft, greasy stone, which you can cut like cheese, which you can drive a furrow into with your chisel an inch deep, as a ploughman furrows his field. Well, of course, with this sort of stuff the workman goes instinctively in for deep cutting; he *can* cut deep,—and he does cut deep;—and he can cut fast, and he does cut fast;—and he can cut fantastically,—and he goes in for fancy. What is more, the white surface itself has no preciousness in it, but it becomes piquant when opposed with black shadow, and this flamboyant chiselling is therefore exactly, compared to a fine sculpture, what a Prout sketch is to a painting:—black and white,—against gentle and true colour.

18. Now what this Abbeville work is typically, all late northern work is broadly:—black and white sketching against perfect form; and what there is of good and bad in that method is all mingled in it. On the one hand there is not a greater distinction between vital sculpture for building, and dead sculpture, than that a true workman paints with his chisel,—does not carve the form of a thing, but cuts the effect of its form. In the great statue of Voltaire at the French Academy,[1]—a miracle of such work—the light in the eye is obtained by a projecting piece of marble. All Donatello's work—all Mino of Fiesole's—all

[1] [This is a slip of the pen for the Théâtre Français, in the *foyer* of which stands the celebrated statue of Voltaire by Houdon (1741–1828). Ruskin noted it in his diary of 1868:—

"*October* 7.—*Tartuffe* and Beaumarchais in evening. Note statue of Voltaire (Houdon); the light left in eyes by projecting point of marble; inimitable as realization in all points. Draperies perfect; as portraiture, impossible to go further."]

Digitized by Google

the loveliest Italian cinque-cento—is literally chisel-painting;[1] and it is continually apt to run into too much trick and under-cutting. I can't go into that, now—it begins with the use of the drill in Byzantium capitals. But the issue of it is that you have at last too much superficial effect, —too much trickery,—not enough knowledge of real form. But then you have a knowledge of effect which is quite consummate, and I know nothing in the whole range of art in which the touch is so exquisitely measured to its distance as in this flamboyant. Not one accent is ever lost,—it looks equally fine all over; but at forty feet above the eye you find it is actually so coarse that you cannot believe it is the work you saw from below.

But broadly;—here is the final corruption:—that it becomes a design of lace in white, on a black ground; not a true or intelligent rendering of organic form.[2]

14. And now we come to another physical condition. Flamboyant architecture is of stone in churches,—but contemporaneously of wood in houses.[3]

So you see—the workman's life practice is all in chalk, —or all in oak,—either in a soft effaceable thing, or a tough fibrous thing. His design becomes sketchy, for one cause;—and fibrous, nervous, and edgy for the other. For observe;—in carving wooden beams, you can always get an effect cheaply by bringing out your edges, but it is difficult to get a sharp edge out of marble without breaking it;—and impossible to cut a thin edge out of granite,—but in wood, up come the edges whether you like them or not, at every blow. That's the reason why dead game is so often carved in wood. You have only to jag at the

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 178.]

[2] [Here the MS. notes, "Before leaving the use of chalk, show Ward's gable"; that is, No. 44 in the Catalogue (see below, p. 276).]

[3] [The MS. here has a note, "Show Lisieux 37, François 1st 38"; that is, Prout's "Houses at Lisieux," No. 37 in the Catalogue, "showing the general arrangement of the ornamentation of timber houses in North France in the Flamboyant Period" (below, p. 275); and the photograph of the Maison de François I., in the Rue de la Tannerie at Abbeville, No. 38 in the Catalogue (below, p. 276). For other remarks on wooden and stone architecture, see *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, Vol. XIV. pp. 414 *seq.*]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Ruskin Allen & Co. Sc

Details from the West Front of St. Vulfran, Abbeville

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

feathers, and there they are. So, again, the grain of wood is tormenting if one has to cut forms across it, but it lends itself at once to a current curve with the grain. So that this sort of line becomes necessarily characteristic, and goes into the stone-work, till at last you have it insisted on, as in the 'prentice pillar at Roslin.[1] But more than this: working in wood, and living among woods, the carver was continually dealing with branches of trees, and he saw the beauty of leaves as connected with branches, more than any one ever did before; and he saw especially quantities of dead leaves, and got to like the way they twisted, from being used to it. Now I luckily happen once to have made a careful study of a cluster of dead oak leaves, and more luckily still, I kept the cluster I drew it from. There's a Flamboyant crocket for you![2]

15. Now for the moral part of it. So far as the workman knew what dead leaves were and loved them, the work is beautiful. But so far as he liked dead leaves better than living ones, and twigs of oak better than living creatures, it is a degraded one. Now see. Here at Abbeville, the leaves are either shrivelled and dead, or wrinkled as cabbage is wrinkled; but here at Bourges[3] is strong Gothic,—the leaves are all alive, smooth, glossy, elastic, and tender with youth. Here is the glow and the bloom of an unstinted vitality. Here literally is the frost,—here literally the wrinkles—of age.

16. Now the next character of this architecture is curiously mingled in physical and moral causes. Physically, it is architecture for a damp climate, in soft stone, which needed to be protected in the most delicate and important parts of the carving, as far as possible from rain, that it might not moulder, and that the faces might not be deformed by stains. So each statue, instead of being freely

[1] [See Vol. XVI. p. 373 *n.*]

[2] [No. 20 in the Catalogue (p. 272). The sketch is at Oxford, and the actual cluster is also preserved in the Ruskin Drawing School. With this passage compare *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, 1878, No. 285 (Vol. XX.).]

[3] [The reference is to No. 14 in the Catalogue (p. 271).]

Digitized by Google

exposed to sun and storm, as in Greece,—has its little canopy well projecting over it, and the niche becomes as important as the statue.[1] But note the moral part of this change. As people began to gain more civilized domestic habits, each man's house became of greater importance to him: each statue has a house of its own. And further,—as the world became more luxurious people began to think solitude more sacred; each saint, instead of joining in choir or procession, must have his own little den and cave, all to himself. So each holy statue has its own oratory, and every saint has his special tabernacle; and at last the saintship disappears in the seclusion; and all over England and France you have tabernacle work instead of sculpture, Shrines instead of Saints, and Canopies instead of Kings.

And I cannot—and I suppose I need not—follow out the relative moral change which that means,—of which before the last French Revolution we had seen enough.[2]

17. Now the next point of decline is not physical at all; it is wholly a mental matter—excess, namely, of ingenuity in construction. There is always a steady increase in this particular kind of skill in every school of building, from its birth to its fall. It builds more and more ingeniously every day, and at last expires in small mathematical conceits.

The first idea of construction is the simplest possible; two stones set on end, and another set on the top. That is Stonehenge construction,—it is Egyptian construction,—it is Greek construction. Not ingenious,—but very secure, if your stone is good. And with that simplest of constructions are connected, without any exception, all the best schools of sculpture; for there is no great sculpturesque school even of advanced Gothic, after the horizontal lintel

[1] [On this subject compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 330).]

[2] [Ruskin, it will be remembered, was an admirer of the Third Napoleon and his régime, which at the date of this lecture had not yet been overthrown. By "the last French Revolution" he thus means the *coup d'état* which placed Napoleon on the throne. For his description of the state of France before that event, see Vol. VIII. p. xxxii.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Southern Porch: Abbeville

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

has quite vanished into the vault.[1] Well, next to this horizontal stone, come two stones, giving a gable;—then the arch, and then endless systems of narrower shafts and higher arches, until the mind of the builder is mainly occupied in finding new ways of making his work stand, and look as if it couldn't stand. Now there is nothing more delightful in their own way than these subtle contrivances of later Gothic, through which Strassburg tower stands up five hundred feet transparent as a cloud,—and Salisbury spire springs like the foam jet over a hollow wave,—foundationless.[2]

18. But, exactly in proportion as the builder's mind is occupied with these mechanical conditions, it is necessarily unoccupied by thoughts connected with human passion or historical event.

Mathematics are delightful and absorbing, but they are not pathetic; good mason's work, or good engineer's, is intensely satisfactory to the person doing it, and leaves him no time for sentiment, or for what it is now the somewhat vulgar fashion to call sentimentality.[3] And in exactly measured and inevitable degree, as architecture is more ingenious, it is less passionate. Only the other day I was speaking to one of our quite leading Gothic architects about the relative value of southern work and northern—equally good of their period,—and especially of the early school of Pisa as compared with that of France. My friend (we owe so much to him that he will pardon me for naming him,—Mr. Street[4]) alleged against the Pisan work that there was no construction in it, which is literally true—so true that I could make no defence at the time. It is rather pinned together than built;—but there

[1] [Compare the chapter on "The Arch Line" in *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. pp. 153 *seq.*).]

[2] [For another reference to the tower of Strassburg, see Vol. VIII. p. 165. For other references to Salisbury spire, see Vol. VIII. pp. 167, 203; Vol. IX. p. 332; and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 18.]

[3] [See below, § 27, p. 262.]

[4] [For other references to Street, see "The Study of Architecture"; above, p. 23 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

are two reasons for this. Architecture which is built with little bits of precious stone, must always be more like mosaic than that which is built of big bits of coarse stone;—but also, the builder's mind is far too busy in other and higher directions to care about construction. It is full of theology, of philosophy, of thoughts about fate, about love, about death,—about heaven and hell. It is not at all an interesting question with him how to make stones balance each other; but it is, how to reconcile doctrines;—the centre of gravity of vaults is of little moment with him,—but the centre of Fortitude in spirits is much; —not but that his arches and stones, however rudely balanced, did stick together somehow;[1] there is no defiance of construction in them, only no attention is paid to it; if the thing stands, that is all that is wanted. But I think you must see at once what a vital difference it must make at last in schools of building, whether their designer has his head full of mathematical puzzles, or of eager passions;—whether he is only a dextrous joiner, manufacturing hollow stone boxes,—or a poet, writing his book on pages of marble, and not much caring about the binding of them.

19. And herein, I am therefore able to give you an infallible test of the relative dignity of schools in all time. Some may be more learned than others,—some more graceful,—some more ingenious,—and others more severe; but the infallible test is,—the prevalence of the human element in their sculpture. Where the sculpture leads, and its passions, the school is great and living; where the masonry leads, and its problems,—there the school is mean and dying.

I have made a rough sketch for you here of the tomb of Can Grande, at Verona, which will at once show you what I mean.[2] It is an architecture entirely powerful and

[1] [Here Ruskin added in his first draft:—
"... somehow; and if in five hundred years Time gives as good an account of our houses in Belgravia as of Giotto's Campanile,—well, the worse for those that come after us."]

[2] [See No. 8 in the Catalogue (below, p. 270), and compare Plate XXIII. here.]

Digitized by Google

progressive, because wholly subordinate to figure sculpture. There is no lace work, no crocketing, no tracery, no construction to speak of; the one thing you look at is the image of the knight in his repose; and the one thing you think of is the life from which he reposes. But here[1] is a piece of architecture which is as assuredly dying as the other is progressive, in which the statue is nothing, and the canopy is everything, in which you are delighted by the loveliness of line, or the precision of balance,—but in which you are touched by no regret, and bear away with you no memory.

20. Now with this great moral change in the temper from passionate to mechanical, there is associated a most curious change in method of construction. When humanity and history were the main things in the architect's mind, his broad surfaces were everything to him, and his limiting lines unimportant. But when construction became principal with him, and story subordinate,—the shaft and the arch rib became everything, and the wall nothing,—until it was found that, in fact, a building might be constructed by nothing but ribs, a mere osseous thorax of a building, instead of a living body. And the critical moment,—the turn of fate,—the fastening of a disease that might be conquered, into disease that was mortal to Gothic architecture,—was what I long ago defined in the *Stones of Venice*, as the substitution of the line for the mass as the element of decoration.[2] For early work had walls covered with sculpture, and windows divided by pillars. Late work has its walls covered with lace, and its windows spun across with cobwebs. And this is not a mere increase in subtlety, or excess in quantity. It is total and fatal change in principle. Look here,—here's a picture,—and here's a frame. Early architecture decorated with this;—late architecture decorates with that. Literally,—and to the fullest

[1] [Probably No. 33 in the Catalogue (p. 275).]

[2] [Not in the *Stones of Venice*, but in the *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (ch. ii. § 23): see Vol. VIII. p. 90.]

Digitized by Google

extent,—this is true. In early work, you have a tablet covered with sculpture, and a decorated moulding round it;—that is all right; but in late work, you have no sculpture,—but are to enjoy the moulding.

21. But now observe, secondly: it is interwoven Architecture.[1] Not merely linear,—but flexibly linear, twisted and wreathed so as to make the stone look ductile. Herein is its great distinction from the English perpendicular; and it is an entirely essential distinction. And to an architect it would necessarily appear that in this it was inferior to the English school,—and that pretending to make stone look not like stone, and defying many of the laws of mechanical structure, it had forfeited all title to be ranked with the rigid legitimacy of buildings. And that is in the main, true; this system of interweaving is an abandonment of the principle, which is, that every material should have its qualities insisted on, not disguised; and that all ornament is wrong which contradicts or conceals the laws of stable masonry. But it is necessary that the true root and cause of this character should be understood, before we can judge it justly.

22. You are doubtless all aware that from the earliest times, a system of interwoven ornament has been peculiarly characteristic of northern design, reaching greatest intensity of fancy in the Irish manuscripts represented by the Book of Kells,[2]—and universal in Scandinavia and among the Norman race. But you may not have considered,—that, disguised by other and more subtle qualities, the same instinct is manifest in the living art of the whole world. This delight in the embroidery, intricacy of involution,—the labyrinthine wanderings of a clue, continually lost, continually recovered, belongs — though in a more chastised and delicate phase — as much to Indian, to Arabian, to Egyptian, and to Byzantine work, as to that of Norway and Ireland;—nay, it existed just as strongly in the Greek

[1] [See again *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 91–92.]
[2] [At Trinity College, Dublin; of the second half of the seventh century.]

Digitized by Google

mind in its best times; only as all other powers and instincts of art were theirs besides, the Greeks never narrowed their ingenuity into mere looping and knotting of lines, and they brought out their delight in involution, only in subordination to truth of human and animal form. What is with a Byzantine nothing but basket work, is with the Greek a confusion of limbs of the horses as they turn in a chariot race; and what with a Norman would have been only a running troop of hunted beasts, or creeping thicket of twisted branches, is with the Greek a procession of youths and maidens. But in all living art this love of involved and recurrent line exists, — and exists essentially—it exists just as much in music as in sculpture, and the continually lost and recovered threads and streams of melody in a perfect fugue, correspond precisely in their sweet science of bewildering succession, to the loveliest traceries over the gold of an early missal, or to the fantasies of the stone work, in which you would have thought some fairy's hand

> "Twixt poplars straight the osier wand
> In many a freakish wreath had twined;
> Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
> And changed the willow wreaths to stone."[1]

23. But I must pass on quickly to the essential character of it,—this interweaving,—that from which it has its name—Flamboyant.

I was showing you a few minutes ago the difference between the elastic lines of early sculpture, and the crisped, contracted lines of late sculpture. But there is a worse character of lines than crispness. There is the character of relaxation. You may lose the spring of youth in two ways. By stiffening of age, or by languor,—and the languor is the worse of the two. And that is the way in which the lines of ornamental design corrupted themselves at this period everywhere, not in Gothic only,—nay, not so much

[1] [*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto ii. stanza 11: quoted also in Vol. XIV. p. 415.]

Digitized by Google

in Gothic as in the Renaissance that was superseding it. Everywhere loose lines of fillets, ribands, and weakly or wildly undulatory drapery, were beginning to be chosen in preference to the elastic lines of organic form; and thus, to the smallest particular, the forms of art echoed the temper of their age; the fluttered line announced the feeble will, and the unbound robe, the licentious temper.

24. But in the Northern Gothic, and especially in this flamboyant school, there was another and a quite nobler influence at work; there *was* this licentiousness; but with it there was a strange fear and melancholy, which had descended unbroken from the gloom of Scandinavian religion,—which was associated always with the labour, the darkness, and the hardships of the North, and which in its resistance to the increasing luxury of the time, took now a feverish and frantic tendency towards the contemplation of death,[1]—clinging to this as its only rebuke and safety, tempted by luxury on one side, and tormented by remorse upon the other,—and most of all by the great baseness of illiterate Christianity in the fear of a physical hell[2]—mingled with indignation against the vices of the priests,—which brought a bitter mockery and low grotesque into the art that had once breathed in affectionate faith and childish obedience. So that you have the pensiveness of Albert Dürer's Melencholia, and the majesty of his Knight walking with Death,—and the fantasy and fever of his Apocalypse,—and the luxury of his wanton and floating Fortune,[3]—and the insatiable intensity of redundant minuteness, and as it were an avarice of nothing in his pebbles and leaves; and you have the mixed mockery and despair of Holbein's Dance of Death,—and a thousand such others,—and all the

[1] [See Nos. 26–31 in the Catalogue (below, p. 274), which were shown to illustrate this part of the lecture. The "Melencholia" and "Knight" are reproduced in Vol. VII. pp. 310, 312.]

[2] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 360, and Vol. XVIII. p. 302.]

[3] [For other references to the "Apocalypse," see Vol. VI. p. 265; Vol. XI. p. 172; *Ariadne Florentina*, § 260, and *Art of England*, § 101. For the "Fortune," see Vol. XV. p. 411, and *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 169, 252. For Dürer's "gloomily minute" detail, see Vol. III. p. 186.]

Digitized by Google

powers and instincts of which these were the sign, thrilling and contending in the breasts of men, and forcing themselves into every line of the last forms of the shrines of their expiring religion. So that the very threads of the now thin and nervous stone work catch the ague of mixed wantonness and terror, and—weak with unwholesome and ominous fire—flamboyant with a fatal glow—tremble in their ascent as if they were seen through troubled and heated air, over a desert horizon;—and lose themselves at last in the likeness,—no more as the ancient marbles, of the snows of Olympus,—but of the fires of condemnation.

25. Now you have just heard how in that faultless and intensely perceptive description of Melrose, which was built just at this period,—Scott fastened at once on the characteristic structural feature—interweaving. Much more did he feel and fasten upon this spiritual character, and, as in few words he has made memorable to you the art of this masonry,—so in a few sweet verses, which tell the legend of another, the fairest building of this time in Scotland,—he will make memorable to you the sadness, the foreboding of death, and the feverish and unconsoling superstition which haunted, as they vanished, the last of the Gothic spires.[1]

26. I have hitherto traced for you only the weaknesses

[1] [Here no doubt Ruskin read some lines from the ballad of Rosabelle (*Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto vi. stanza 23):—

"O'er Roslin all that dreary night,
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moon-beam . . .

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply . . .

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair."

Roslin Chapel was founded in 1446, but was not finished till the end of the century. St. Vulfran's at Abbeville (commenced 1488) was thus of about the same date.]

Digitized by Google

and errors of this architecture, or its vain beauty. I have not yet told you the great one fault by which it fell. Commonly it is said of all Gothic, that it rose in simplicity, that it declined by becoming too florid and too rich.

Put that error at once out of your minds. All beautiful and perfect art, literature or nature, is rich. Titian is rich, Beethoven is rich, Shakespeare is rich, and the forests, and the fields, and the clouds are richest of all. And the two most beautiful Gothic pieces of work in the world,—the South door of the Cathedral of Florence, and the North transept door of the Cathedral of Rouen,[1]—were both in the thirteenth century covered with sculpture as closely as a fretted morning sky with sands of cloud.[2]

But the Gothic fell, because its wealth was empty and its profusion heartless; it fell, because men had become meanly fanciful and vainly sad, or viciously gay,—because it had ceased to be earnest, and ceased to be sincere.

27. I observe that lately among our artists there has been a singular crusade against the word "Sentiment." In the very meeting of the Architects' Institute, to which I have already referred,[3] another of its members declared that he never could see anything but absurdity in the idea that Gothic architecture owed any of its merits to the Sentimentality of the People at large.[4] That the idea appeared absurd to him, I do not wonder; but the fact,—singular as it may be,—was actually so, that in these days the

[1] [For another reference to the rich finish on the South door of the Cathedral of Florence, see *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. p. 174; and for the North transept door of Rouen, *ibid.*, pp. 89, 165, and Plate X.]

[2] [Compare the description of clouds "waved like sand" above, p. xlii. *n.*]

[3] [See above, § 18; the reference, however, is to the first draft in the MS., where Ruskin particularised his reference to "the somewhat vulgar fashion to call sentiment" by allusion to Professor Kerr.]

[4] [The reference is to a discussion which took place at a meeting of the Institute on June 8, 1868, upon a paper read at a previous meeting by Mr. Digby Wyatt on "The Foreign Artists employed in England during the Sixteenth Century." In the course of the discussion Ruskin had been quoted, and Professor Kerr said: "What we have had so often laid before us we have had repeated once more to-night—that in the Middle Ages architecture flourished in consequence of the enthusiastic sentimentality in the people at large. I, for one, never could see anything but the greatest absurdity in such an idea" (*Sessional Papers*, 1867–1868, p. 252).]

Digitized by Google

people at large had sentiments, and acted upon them,—and that their architecture owed to these, not only its merits, but even its existence; for, to take one central and characteristic instance: "One saw at the re-erection of the front of Chartres in 1145"—these are the words of an eye-witness: "One saw people of wealth and power, accustomed to a life of ease, harness themselves in crowds to the carts that carried the stones; and though sometimes a thousand persons, men and women,—so vast were the weights that had to be drawn—were harnessed to one chariot, there reigned so great a silence that no murmur was heard; only when they stopped to rest, they spoke: making confession of their sins with prayers and tears."[1] Very absurd, doubtless—but an entirely practical business; —and perhaps, in another seven hundred years, we may also seem absurd to those who shall come after us,—though our sentiments, such as they are, and the burdens we have laid on ourselves, and the chariots we have dragged, may leave behind them no monument of imbecility like the towers of Chartres Cathedral.

But be that as it may, this was the reason that the Gothic fell,—that it had lost to the core its faith, its truth, and its sensibility, and was incapable alike of being grafted with the grace of a Pagan religion, or communicating, even to one generation more, the humility—or the glory—of its own.[2]

28. Finally. Architecture can only be built by a Thoughtful Nation, and a Pure Nation, living up to its conscience,—who have a Common Pride, and a Common-Wealth.

By a Thoughtful Nation. It cannot be built by clowns, or by people who are generally low in sphere of thought and power of intellect. It does not matter how good they

[1] [Translated from a letter of Haimon, Abbé of Saint Pierre-sur-Dives, which is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. It is cited, with other contemporary documents to like effect, in the Abbé Bulteau's *Monographie de la Cathédrale de Chartres*, vol. i. p. 91.]

[2] [Here, again, compare *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 98, 99.]

Digitized by Google

are, if they are foolish or simple, or busied chiefly and earnestly in vulgar business. It is right in Cheshire to care for cheese,—right in Newcastle to be occupied in coals,—right in the Highlands to be interested in grouse;—but a nation interested only in cheese or coal or grouse cannot be architects. You can only have great buildings when the rulers or guides of the people are eagerly occupied—unselfishly—in the highest spheres of intellect open to them in their age.

29. Then, secondly, I said, by a Pure people. That is to say, the arts being intensely the work of Human creatures, can only be attained by them in the measure of their humanity, in the degree of their separation from brutes, both in thought and character. Cathedrals can't be built by lambs, and they can't be built by serpents or swine. However loving you are, you must have brains—or you can't build; and however clever you are, you must be affectionate and self-commandant,—or you can't build. I don't say how far we are, or are not this,—but only,—that just so far, we can have art, and no farther. So much as there is in us of serpent or of swine, of malice or of greed,—so much less there is of art capacity; and so far as we are affectionate and temperate, or self-commandant,—so much more we have of art-capacity.

30. Thirdly: Architecture is possible only to a people who have a Common Pride, and a Common-Wealth,—whose Pride is Civic,—and is the Pride of All.

Good architecture can't be built by Modest people; you must be very saucy, and think yourselves very fine people before you can build,—but your pride must be in what you *all do*, and all *are*. Among us, I notice that it is always individual. We want to do a thing by ourselves, to say a thing that other people have not said,—to get it allowed by them that we did it or we said it. Now when people have real faculty for art, they never care much about putting their names to what they have done. You hardly ever get at a Greek workman's name; hardly ever

Digitized by Google

at a Gothic workman's; but there is always the strongest and brightest National or Civic pride,—the determination that they will have the noblest temple or the highest tower for a thousand miles round.[1]

Fourthly. No architecture can be built but by a nation which has a common wealth,—a common well-being. And this first in a most literal way. There must be perfect freemasonry and unity among all the workmen, from highest to lowest; and the salaries of the highest must not be high, and of the lowest not mean or miserable. There must be gradations of authority, according to faculty,—and that will always be naturally and necessarily given to the man who can design most brilliantly; all the others will look for government and for working drawings;—he will be the master mason,—but he must be nothing more: difference of authority—yes; difference of pay,—no—or at least in very small degree. It is the greatest glory of a King, or General, or a Master of Craft,—to be poor. Not only their greatest glory, but their greatest power. No rich king—no rich captain—no rich craftsman—ever has his arm free. You will find that a notable lantern to take with you in reading history. Look—if you want to know where nations are in power—Look if their kings are poor—there, their kings are strong. Look where masters have low wages—there, they are masters indeed.

31. And for the practical application of this, I will give you a direct and sharp one. And there is nothing, of all I have had to tell you, *more* certain,—nothing for us at present so immediately needing to be told.

No architecture will ever be possible where the *master workman has a commission on the cost.*[2] Pay him a salary—a high one if you choose—though you had better not,—but always salary, not commission. Pay your masters only as working men; but masters and men together as

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the rivalry between Beauvais and Amiens: *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 19 (Vol. XII. pp. 38–39).]

[2] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 5.]

Digitized by Google

gentlemen,—and you may yet see a chisel handled again by an English hand, as in the days of old.

82. But, further—and last of lastest. There must be commonwealth, as regards those for whom you build, as well as by whom you build. We shall never make our houses for the rich beautiful, till we have begun by making our houses for the poor beautiful. As it is a common and diffused pride, so it is a common and diffused delight on which alone our future arts can be founded.

Delight—observe. We have seen that Gothic architecture fell, not by its luxury, but its despondency. You may have as much luxury as you like, when everybody is at ease,—and as much mirth as you can win, so that everybody be cheerful. I don't ask you to drag carts full of stones, nor to think all day long of Death. Nay, you must think less of Death—in play—and not have so much cause to think of it in earnest. You must not build for pleasure in the front of the house, while there is despair at the back of it.

Do you recollect in Mr. Helps' beautiful story of Realmah, what Ellesmere's final maxim about architecture is? "Never mind the outside."[1] I suppose Ellesmere himself knew, but I doubt if all his hearers knew, how deep it went.

Never mind the outside. Never mind the houses that look to the Park. Mind the houses that look into Seven Dials. You have just heard authentically from Dr. Hawksley,[2] that you are paying seven millions a year for your London poor, and that Pauperism is on the increase. You fancy perhaps that by giving so much, you show how much you care for them. Ah, no; that is the fine you pay for not caring for them. Give the half of that, in love; you

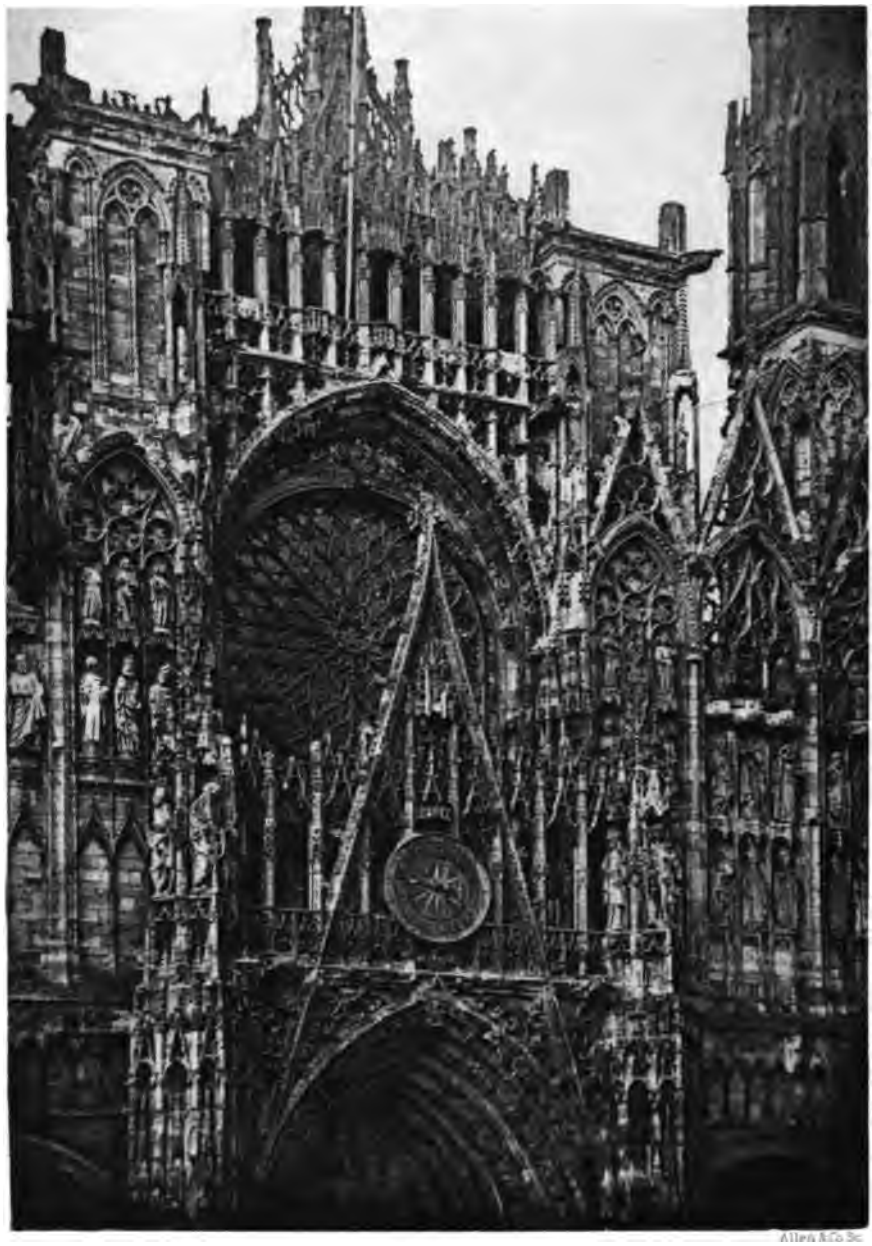
[1] [*Realmah, by the author of "Friends in Council,"* 1868, vol. ii. pp. 294, 298.]

[2] [The reference is to a paper read at a meeting of the Association for the Prevention of Pauperism and Crime in the Metropolis on December 17, 1868, by Thomas Hawksley, M.D., and afterwards published as a pamphlet (*The Charities of London*, 1869). The figures referred to by Ruskin will be found at pp. 7, 8; those of expenditure on the poor include London public charities, estimate of private alms, etc.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



The West Front of Rouen Cathedral

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

need not give the other half in money. Register them—look after them—let the air and sun in among them;—instead of thinking it pious to light candles by daylight,[1] think it pious to light windows where there's only candle-light; and you will find you soon will have the best half of your seven millions to spare, that you may spend in magnificence what you wasted in misery,—and bringing back the true Saints to their shrines, and building a tabernacle work that shall keep out the wind and the rain from shivering bodies,—carve a victorious St. George and a prostrate Flamboyant Dragon over every poor man's door.

[1] [An allusion to the Ritualistic movement, prompted by Ruskin's talks with the tallow-chandler at Abbeville: see above, Introduction, pp. xli., xlii.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

References to the Series of Paintings and Sketches, from Mr. Ruskin's Collection, shown in Illustration of the Relations of Flamboyant Architecture to contemporary and subsequent Art.

1. PORTRAIT OF THE DOGE ANDRÉA GRITTI. By *Titian.*

   Showing the relation of Venetian Art to Venetian Character, and the subordination of rich and minute decorative design to faultless breadth of treatment.
   Naturalist art of the highest school.[1]

2. STUDY FROM THE REMAINS OF THE FRESCO OF ST. CATHERINE, BY LUINI. In the Monasterio Maggiore at Milan. (*R.*)*

   The original work is a perfect type of the rare unison of ideal purity of conception, with consummate decorative and pictorial power.
   Purist art of the highest school.[2]

3. PORTRAIT OF NAPOLEON 1ST. By *Meissonier.*

   Realistic art of the lower school; but consummate of its kind. Look at it with the lens.
   Showing the relation of the disturbed and dramatic manner of modern art, to the disquietude of National Character.[3]

4. BOYS. By *William Hunt.*

   Happy and rustic art, employed on happy and rustic subject. To be compared with the Napoleon, in order farther to show the relations of art and character.[4]

* The studies marked (*R.*) are by my own hand. This one was made for the Arundel Society, to show, as far as possible, in facsimile, the state of the existing fresco.

---

[1] [See above, §§ 8, 11, pp. 248, 250, for notices of this portrait; and for other particulars, see the Introduction, p. lxxvi.]

[2] [See above, § 8, p. 248, for a notice of this copy; and for Ruskin's letters when he was making it, Introduction, pp. lxxii.–lxxiv.]

[3] [See above, § 9, p. 249; and for further notices of this picture, which Ruskin showed again in 1879–1880 at the Prout and Hunt Exhibition, see Vol. XIV. pp. 381, 438 and *n.*]

[4] [See above, § 9, p. 249. The drawing is now No. 143 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford.]

Digitized by Google

5. A French Cottage Interior. By *Edward Frère.*

Showing the perfect phase of simple domestic art in France. It is more pensive than in England, and trained in a severe school of subdued chiaroscuro.

This work of Frère's is quite exquisite in this respect.[1]

6. Griffin on North Side of Porch of Duomo of Verona.

Gothic sculpture of finest style. (*Circa* 1200?) (*R.*)

The curves all springy and strong, or disciplined into expression (as in the writhe of the serpent). Nothing loose, nothing fillet or riband-like. Sketched at Verona, 1852.[2]

7. Griffin on South Side of Porch of Duomo, Verona. (*R.*)

Showing the same general characters. Sketched at Verona, 1845.[3]

8. Pencil Study of the Tomb of Can Grande, at Verona. (*R.*)

(From daguerreotype, and detail drawings taken in 1852.) Showing the noble manner of regarding death on which the greatest art was founded.

Circa 1340. Gothic sculpture and architecture of the consummately highest class.[4]

9. Pencil Sketch (unfinished) of Tomb of Mastino, Verona. (*R.*)

Showing the same peace in manner of contemplating death, and co-relative perfectness in Gothic style.[5]

10. Sketch of one of the Gables of the Canopy of the same Tomb. "The Death of Abel." (*R.*)

Showing right relations of sculpture to surfaces and mouldings, and right use of inlaid marbles.

[1] [For another reference to this picture (which used to hang in Ruskin's rooms at Corpus) of a girl peeling carrots by a cottage fire, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 111. Compare the notices of Frère in Vol. XIV. pp. 143, 174, 347. At p. 142 of that volume another of Frère's interiors—"The Child's Prayer"—is reproduced. See also above, p. 199.]

[2] [This sketch was engraved in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 140). A later sketch of the same griffin was No. 4 in the "Verona" Catalogue: see below, p. 449.]

[3] [This may have been the drawing which is reproduced as Plate XIV. in Vol. XII. p. 193.]

[4] [This sketch was also No. 21 in the "Verona" Catalogue (see below, p. 454). There are three drawings of the subject by Ruskin at Oxford (Reference Series, No. 57, and Educational Series, Nos. 76 and 77). No. 8 here was either the first or the second of them. Plate XXIII. here is from Reference Series, No. 57, with details added from Educational Series, No. 77.]

[5] [Probably No. 58 in the Reference Series at Oxford.]

Digitized by Google

11. Study of the Sculpture of Adam and Eve, on another Gable of the same Tomb.[1]

Entirely perfect as an example of architectural treatment of foliage and figure.
Eve's foot rests on a lamb—a lovely expression of her trust, as the "mother of all living."[2]
Admirably drawn for me, at Verona, by Mr. J. Bunney.[3]

12. Study of Tomb over Cemetery Gate, St. Anastasia, Verona. (R.)

Chiefly for its mass and colour.
Showing right subordination of minor ornament.
Gothic of the highest class.
Sketched at Verona, 1852.[4]

13. Front of Chartres Cathedral.

Finest early French style. Figure sculpture principal, as the element of decoration.

14. Central French Gothic.

Two arches (about the real size) from left flank of main entrance at Bourges.
Naturalist decorative sculpture of the highest class.
Enlarged from Photograph by Mr. A. Burgess.[5]

15. The Flamboyant Element in Greek Art, associated with Metal Work.

The fountain Arethusa. (*R.*)
Study of coin of Syracuse. The hair representing typically the currents of the fountain mingling with the sea. *Circa* 400 B.C.[6]

16. The Flamboyant Element in Greek Art.

Rough study of head of Lacinian Juno, on coin of Crotona. Hair typically representing drifts of storm. (*R.*)[7]

[1] [This study is now No. 92 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford.]
[2] [Genesis iii. 20.]
[3] [See above, Introduction, pp. l., li.]
[4] [This drawing of the Castelbarco Tomb is reproduced as Plate D, opposite p. 176 in Vol. IX.; see also *ibid.*, p. li.]
[5] [For Burgess, see Vol. XIV. pp. xxxii.–xxxiii., 349–356.]
[6] [For other notices of this coin, see *Aratra Pentelici*, § 21 and Plate II.]
[7] [Ruskin showed this study in one of his Oxford lectures: see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 145.]

Digitized by Google

17. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN CENTRAL ITALIAN ART.

Study of head. Leonardo da Vinci. (Photograph.[1])
Feverish delight in wild curvature in hair; enhanced by dwelling much, and with intense minuteness of study, on the lines of clouds and currents of water. (See drawings at Windsor.)
Very beautiful of its class.
The original is in the Louvre, and much more beautiful; the photograph darkens it.

18. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN CENTRAL ITALIAN ART. "Judith." By *Andrea Mantegna.*[2]

Feverish delight in fillets and curled hair.
Note especially the head of Holofernes.

19. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN CENTRAL ITALIAN ART.

Oak leaves slightly too flowing, soft, and undulatory.
Study in chalk, made for me by a French draughtsman, to show the exact touches of Correggio's brush in the central group of leaves in the Antiope.[3]
First-rate of its kind.

20. THE FLAMBOYANT ELEMENT IN NATURAL FORM.

Frost-bitten oak leaves. (*R.*)
Compare with finial and crocket decorations of Abbeville.
Exquisitely engraved from my sketch, by Mr. J. Armytage.[4]

21. THREE MADONNAS. By *Albert Dürer.*

Showing the principal conditions of Flamboyant design in figures; angular and much divided drapery, violently-curled hair; interlaced ornamentation (note the sceptre, crowns, and wattled fence), and feverish intensity of detail everywhere.[5]

[1] [Perhaps "a little red chalk drawing which every one remembers who has seen the drawings at the Louvre . . . a face set in the shadow of its own hair" (Pater's *Renaissance*, 1873, p. 108). The large collection of drawings by Leonardo in the Library of Windsor Castle contains a large number of studies of "waves, whirlwinds, hurricanes, and cyclones" (see E. Müntz, *Leonardo da Vinci*, vol. ii. p. 275, of the English edition); compare "Verona, and its Rivers," § 31 (below, p. 447).]

[2] [This was no doubt a photograph of the drawing in the Uffizi.]

[3] [For other references to this picture in the Louvre, see Vol. VII. pp. 53, 117, 416.]

[4] [See above, § 14, p. 253. The engraving by J. C. Armytage is Plate 53 ("The Dryad's Crown") in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 53). The original drawing is now in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford (Educational Series, No. 264).]

[5] [One of the engravings here shown was "The Virgin crowned by two Angels" (with a wattled fence behind), which Ruskin reproduced in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 247; see also *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, No. 66, and No. 74 in the Educational Series for another "Madonna Crowned." For Dürer's "feverish intensity of detail," see above, § 24, p. 260 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

22. THREE SUBJECTS FROM THE PASSION. By *Albert Dürer.*

Giving additional instances of the characteristics of Flamboyant design. Grotesque developed, both in figures and their dress. Great pleasure taken in the curls of the hair, interweaving of the crown of thorns, and spiny helmet and weapons. Tassels, wrinkled folds, and fillets or straps—*linear* decoration of every kind—made too important.

(Consummate art of its class however, never surpassed in thoughtful masterhood of line engraving, or in its special phase of imagination.)[1]

23. *Albert Dürer's* "JUSTICE," *Giotto's, and Raphael's.*

Dürer's literally "Flamboyant"—the face on fire. The conception distorted and terrible.

Giotto's entirely noble and pure in conception; but childish and feeble in workmanship.

Raphael's, affected and false in conception; perfect in workmanship. Both Giotto's and Raphael's entirely peaceful, and free from the disturbing Northern Terror.[2]

24. COSTUMES. By *Holbein.* (Photograph.)

Flamboyant characters of curvature and fillet decoration. Showing the influences in character and fashion which corrupted architecture.

Splendid in drawing. The centre one unsurpassably fine as pen and sepia work. The originals are at Basle.[3]

25. DEAD CHRIST. By *Holbein.* (Photograph.) Original at Basle.

Showing the dark and sad manner of contemplating death, which gradually corrupted both the religion and art of the northern nations. Very wonderful of its kind.[4]

[1] [Some of these subjects also were afterwards placed by Ruskin in his collection at Oxford: see *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, No. 124.]

[2] [Dürer's "Justice" is a small engraving, showing a figure seated on a lion; holding the scales in his left hand and a sword, uplifted, in his right. Giotto's (in the Arena Chapel) is engraved as the frontispiece to *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 11: see also *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 398). Raphael's figure of Justice is a fresco in the Vatican. Ruskin placed photographs of the Giotto and the Raphael in his Oxford collection: see his note in the *Catalogue of the Standard Series*, No. 18.]

[3] [Compare in the Oxford collection, Educational Series, No. 120, and Nos. 234, 235.]

[4] [For another note on this picture in the Basle Museum, see *Lectures on Art*, § 150.]

Digitized by Google

26. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH.[1] Coat of Arms. By *Albert Dürer.*

Feverish delight in flamboyant violence of curvature. The Satyr's head is, to my belief, the best bit of design and engraving of this class, existing.[2]

27. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH. In its noblest phase. *Dürer's* "Knight and Death."[3]

28. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH. "The Dragon of the Hesperides." *J. M. W. Turner.*

Flamboyant curvature in flames and clouds. Well studied from the picture in the National Gallery, by Mr. J. Bunney.[4]

29. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH. In its noblest phase. "Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah." (Liber Studiorum.) *J. M. W. Turner.*[5]

30. NORTHERN GLOOM IN CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH.

Beginning to be sensational. "Death the Avenger," and "Death the Friend." *Alfred Rethel.*[6]

31. DEGRADED CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH FOR MERE PLEASURE IN SENSATION.

When the mind is jaded, and has become incapable of receiving emotion from beauty: last stage of feverish disease in this direction. Japanese art (war ships exploding in a battle), and battle pieces by Gustave Doré.[7]

[1] [For remarks on Nos. 26–31, see above, § 24 (p. 260).]

[2] [This is the "Coat of Arms with a Skull": No. 65 in the *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series.* See also Vol. XI. p. 172, and *Eagle's Nest*, § 155.]

[3] [See Plate D in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 310).]

[4] [No. 477. See Vol. VII. p. 389 (the dragon is engraved as Plate 78); Vol. XIII. pp. 113 *seq.*; and *Lectures on Landscape*, §§ 69–71. A copy of the dragon was afterwards placed in Ruskin's Art Collection at Oxford: see *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 156.]

[5] [See *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, No. 175, and compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 386, 434).]

[6] [For notices of these engravings, see *Elements of Drawing*, Vol. XV. p. 223.]

[7] [For Ruskin's opinion of Japanese art, see *Time and Tide*, § 26; and of Doré, *ibid.*, § 30 (Vol. XVII. pp. 341, 344).]

Digitized by Google

32. Flamboyant Architecture in Venice. (*R.*)

Corrupt. The richness remaining, but the fancy gone. Tracery the only ornament.
Casa Contarini-Fasan.
Sketched in 1841.[1]

33. French advanced Gothic, on the Edge of Decline.

The sculpture less important. The mouldings and frame becoming principal.
South Transept, Rouen Cathedral.

34. French advanced Gothic.

Sculpture taking too much the look of Incrustation.
Frontal of Rheims.[2]

35. German advanced Gothic.

Affectation and violence of curve in gesture of figures.
Statues from porch of Strasburg.[3]

36. Abbeville—Towers of St. Vulfran, seen over Timber Houses, some Thirty Years Ago.

The principal group of houses in the centre is now pulled down.
Pencil sketch by Samuel Prout. Admirable in choice of position, and seizure of essential character.[4]

37. Houses at Lisieux. *Samuel Prout.*

Showing the general arrangement of the ornamentation of timber houses in North France in the Flamboyant period; pinnacles flanking windows, and crocketed arch over door. Prout, being near-sighted, could not give the finer details of the ornament.[5]

[1] [This drawing is in this edition reproduced as Plate 2 in *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 212).]
[2] [Probably a photograph; afterwards No. 80 in the Rudimentary Series at Oxford.]
[3] [Again a photograph, afterwards No. 82 in the Rudimentary Series.]
[4] [Plate IX. in Vol. XIV. (p. 395).]
[5] [Plate XV. in Vol. XIV. (p. 414). For a reference in the lecture to this example, see § 14 *n.* (p. 252).]

Digitized by Google

38. ABBEVILLE.—SPIRAL STAIRCASE IN A HOUSE OF THE FINEST FLAMBOYANT PERIOD.

Photograph taken for me in September last year, when the real vine added its own piece of "redundant" decoration to all the rest.[1]
Perfect work of its class.

39. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN, FROM THE NORTH. (*R.*)

Showing general effect of towers and ruined wall of transept.

40. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—GABLES OF THE CHAPELS OF NORTH AISLE. (*R.*)

Sketched only for their colour, and beauty of worn age. They are soon to be scraped clean—it will be long before the cottage floors are.

41. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN FROM THE EAST. (*R.*)

Showing height of ruined transept wall and old houses of the "Pont d'Amour."[2]

42. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN. (Evening.) (*R.*)

43. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN AND THE GREAT SQUARE. (*R.*)

Showing gabled wooden houses of the sixteenth century (though all much defaced, the two in the angle are characteristic), and quoined brick and stone houses of the seventeenth century.[3]

44. ABBEVILLE.—GABLED HOUSE OF BRICK AND CHALK, WITH TREES OF AVENUE BEFORE COUNTY COURT.

Excellently sketched for me by my assistant, Mr. W. Ward.[4]

45. ABBEVILLE.—ST. VULFRAN—THE WESTERN PORCH.

Photograph taken in 1868.

[1] [Plate VII. in Vol. XIV. (p. 388).]
[2] [An engraving of this drawing by J. C. Armytage is Plate IX. here.]
[3] [For particulars of the drawing (Plate VIII. here), see above, Introduction, p. lxxv.]
[4] [For a reference in the lecture to this example, see § 13 *n.* (p. 252).]

Digitized by Google

46. Abbeville.—St. Vulfran—North Door of Western Porch.

47. Abbeville.—St. Vulfran—Central Door of Western Porch.

48. Abbeville.—St. Vulfran—South Door of Western Porch.[1]

49. French late Gothic.

Gable over Central Porch, Rouen Cathedral.
Sculpture vanishing, Frame and Moulding principal.
As Flamboyant decoration, best of its kind.
Enlarged from Photograph, by Mr. G. Allen.[2]

50. Abbeville.—St. Vulfran—Gable of South Door of Western Porch

Enlarged from Photograph, by Mr. Allen.

[1] [It is not explained whether Nos. 46–48 were sketches or photographs. If the former, No. 48 was no doubt Plate XII. here.]

[2] [The enlargement by Mr. Allen is at Brantwood; Plate XIII. here is reproduced from the negative which was taken by Mr. Burgess. For a reference to this gable, see *Queen of the Air*, § 103; below, p. 390.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

VIII

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR

(1869)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR:

BEING

A STUDY OF THE GREEK MYTHS

OF

CLOUD AND STORM.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 15, WATERLOO PLACE.
1869.

[*The Right of Translation is reserved.*]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.—The Queen of the Air* is made up of the following material:—

(1) Lecture I. (§§ 1–50): a lecture partly delivered at University College, London, on Tuesday, March 9, 1869. Of this lecture no report appeared at the time. One passage in it (§ 42) was incorporated from the Rede Lecture at Cambridge in 1867: see above, p. 176.

(2) Lecture II. (§§ 51–100): this lecture had not been delivered.

(3) Of Lecture III., the following paragraphs had not previously been spoken or printed: §§ 101, 106–127 (in part), 132 (in part) –134 (in part), 143 (in part), and 160.

(4) §§ 102–105 had been delivered as part of a lecture at the Royal Institution on *The Flamboyant Architecture of the Somme*, on Friday, January 29, 1869 (see above, p. 248). No report of the lecture appeared at the time. As Ruskin says that this portion of the lecture "will be better read in this place [*Queen of the Air*] than in its incidental connection with" Abbeville, the passages are in this volume excluded from the lecture and given in *Queen of the Air*.

(5) §§ 127–132 (in part) and § 134 (in part) had appeared in 1868 in the pamphlet *Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes*. For the bibliographical note on this, see Vol. XVII. p. 541 *n*. These paragraphs, having already been printed in this edition (*ibid.*, pp. 541–546), are not repeated in the present volume.

(6) §§ 135–159 had appeared in 1865 in *The Cestus of Aglaia*. For the bibliographical note on this, see above, p. 45. These paragraphs are, in this volume, printed in *The Cestus* (above, pp. 72–81 and 120–133), and are not repeated here.

(7) §§ 161 to end ("The Hercules of Camarina") had been delivered as an address to the Students of the Art School of South Lambeth on March 15, 1869. Of this address no report appeared at the time.

The book made up of the above-mentioned materials has appeared in several editions, as follow:—

First Edition (1869).—The title-page is as shown here on the preceding leaf. Crown 8vo, pp. viii.+199. Preface (here pp. 291–294), pp. iii.–viii.; Text, pp. 1–199. Imprint (in the centre of the last page): "London: Printed by Smith, Elder & Co., Old Bailey, E.C." Headlines, as in this edition. Issued on June 22, 1869, in green cloth boards, lettered across the back: "The | Queen | of the | Air. | Ruskin. | Smith, Elder & Co." Price 6s.

The paragraphs were numbered consecutively throughout the volume. This was the first of Ruskin's books in which this plan was adopted: he

Digitized by Google

speaks of the volume (§ 101) as the first of the series of his corrected works, and adopts in it the plan of numbered paragraphs which henceforth he always followed. He had intended to mark the volume as one of a new series on the title-page, for he said to Professor Norton, "Write me a title-page to go with all the series and with 'The Queen of the Air' subordinate" (*Letters to Norton*, vol. i. p. 204).

Second Edition (1869).—A verbatim reprint, and exact reproduction in binding, etc., of the First, except for the addition of the words "Second Edition" upon the title-page. Issued on August 24, 1869.

Third, or Collected "Works," Edition (1874).—This was Volume IX. of the Works, the general title-page being:—

> The | Works of John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christ Church, Oxford. | Volume IX. | The Queen of the Air. | [*Rose.*] | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1874.

The particular title-page was as follows:—

> The | Queen of the Air: | being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Slade Professor of Fine Art. | New Edition. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1874. [*The Right of Translation is reserved.*]

Octavo, pp. xii. + 208. Preface, pp. v.–x.; Contents, p. xi.; Text, pp. 1–208. Imprint (at foot of the reverse of the title-page and at foot of the last page): "Watson & Hazell, Printers, London and Aylesbury."

Issued on January 14, 1875, in "Ruskin calf," lettered across the back: "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. | IX. | The | Queen of | the Air." Price 18s. In July 1882 some copies were put up in mottled-grey boards, with white paper label on the back, which reads: "Ruskin. | Works. | Vol. IX. | Queen | of the | Air." Price 13s. (1000 copies.)

The text of this edition followed that of the original edition. (There were, however, a few misprints—*e.g.*, "possetsion" in § 71, line 10, and "sepaarting is" for "separating it" in § 83, line 13.)

Fourth, or Collected "Works," Revised Edition (1883).—The general title-page was the same, except for the alteration of date. The particular title-page was:—

> The | Queen of the Air: | being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of | Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Slade Professor of Fine Art, Oxford. | Revised Edition. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, | Orpington, Kent. | 1883. | [*All rights reserved.*]

The collation follows the previous edition. The imprint reads: "Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Printers, London and Aylesbury." Issued in October 1883, in mottled-grey paper boards, with white paper label on the back.

Digitized by Google

(1000 copies.) Price as before; reduced in March 1893 to 15s. (calf) and 9s. 6d. (cloth).

The text of this edition was revised by the Rev. J. P. Faunthorpe; for the variations (which are unimportant), see below.

Collected "Works," Third Edition (1899).—In this edition the general title-page reads:—

> The | Works of John Ruskin | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow | of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | Volume IX. | The Queen of the Air. | George Allen, | Orpington and London. | 1899.

The particular title-page is also different, thus:—

> The | Queen of the Air: | Being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of | Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow of | Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | Third Edition. | George Allen, | Orpington and London. | 1899. | [*All rights reserved.*]

Octavo, pp. xiv.+237. Imprint (at foot of the reverse of the title-page and at foot of p. 237): "Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co., Edinburgh and London." Contents (revised), p. vii.; Preface, pp. ix.-xiii.; Text, pp. 1-199; Index (as in the Small Editions in 1895 and afterwards), pp. 201-237.

Issued in May 1900. (250 copies.) Price 15s. (calf) and 9s. 6d. (cloth); reduced in July to 14s. 6d. (calf) and 7s. 6d. (cloth). This edition is still current. The text follows that of the "Revised Edition."

Small Edition (1887).—Of this edition, the fifth in order of publication, the title-page was as follows:—

> The Queen of the Air: | being | A Study of the Greek Myths | of | Cloud and Storm. | By | John Ruskin, LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, and Honorary Fellow | of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. | George Allen, | Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. | 1887. | [*All rights reserved.*]

Crown 8vo, pp. xii.+239. Imprint (at foot of the reverse of the title-page and at foot of the last page): "Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury." Preface, pp. v.-x.; Contents, p. xi.; Text, pp. 1-239.

Issued in June 1887 in chocolate and in dark green coloured cloth, lettered across the back: "Ruskin. | The | Queen | of the | Air." Price 5s. (2000 copies.)

The text follows that of the Revised Edition of 1883. (There are, however, some misprints—*e.g.*, "national" for "natural" in § 5, line 6.)

The small edition was *re-issued* in June 1890 (2000 copies) and June 1892 (2000); these issues were called "Third" and "Fifth" Editions (*i.e.*, third and fifth thousands of the book in the small form).

In November 1895 it was again *re-issued*. The book was now printed by Messrs. Ballantyne, and an *Index* (by Mr. Wedderburn) was added. (2000 copies.) This was called "Sixth Edition."

Digitized by Google

Re-issued in June 1898 ("Seventh Edition," 1000); October 1899 ("Fourteenth Thousand"); October 1900 ("Fifteenth Thousand"); December 1901 ("Sixteenth Thousand"); and January 1903 ("Seventeenth Thousand"). This last issue is still current; the price was reduced in January 1904 to 3s. 6d.

Pocket Edition (1904).—This edition, printed from the plates used for the editions last described, is uniform with other volumes in the same series (see Vol. XV. p. 6), the title-page being:—

The Queen of | the Air | By | John Ruskin | London: George Allen.

Issued in April 1904 (3000 copies). Price 2s. 6d. Reprinted in June 1904 (2000) and March 1905 (2000).

Unauthorised American Editions have been numerous, in various forms and at various prices from 50 cents upwards.

An *Authorised American* ("Brantwood") *Edition* was issued in 1891 by Charles E. Merrill & Co., New York, with an introduction by Charles Eliot Norton (pp. v.–xiii.).

A *German translation* has recently appeared, with the following title-page:—

Die Königin der Luft. | Studien | über die | griechische Sturm- und Wolkensage. | Von | John Ruskin. | | Aus dem Englischen übersetzt | von | Gertrud P. Wolff. | (*Coat of arms*) | Straßburg, | J. H. Ed. Heitz (Heitz und Mündel).

Crown 8vo, pp. viii. + 190. The translator adds one note (see § 27), and supplies a few of the references.

Reviews of the book appeared in the *Athenæum*, July 17, 1869; the *Spectator*, July 17, 1869; the *Saturday Review*, August 21, 1869; the *Westminster Review*, October 1869, vol. 36, N.S., pp. 663–666; and the *Guardian*, October 27, 1869. A critical study of *The Queen of the Air*, by Mr. R. Warwick Bond, appeared in *St. George*, January 1903, vol. vi. pp. 46–74.

Variæ Lectiones.—The text of the volume, as already stated, was only once revised—namely, in 1883. The following collation (unless otherwise stated) is therefore of the earlier editions with that of 1883. The more interesting variations are given under the text, and to these a reference only is here given.

The variations in the passages (§§ 127–132, 134) reprinted in *The Queen of the Air* from the *Notes on Employment* and on those (§§ 135–159) reprinted from *The Cestus of Aglaia* are elsewhere given; in the former case, in notes under the text in Vol. XVII. pp. 541–546; in the latter, in notes under the text of *Cestus* (above, pp. 72–81, 120–133), or in the bibliographical note (above, p. 46).

With these exceptions—and with the further exception of a few minor misprints (such as, § 71, "possetsion" for "possession"; § 83, "sepaarting"

Digitized by Google

for "separating"), different spellings, punctuation, italics, etc.—the following is a complete list of the various readings:—

Contents.—Eds. 1 and 2 had no list of contents. The "Works" editions of 1874 and 1883, and all the small editions, gave a list (which followed the Preface), enumerating the lectures by short titles—"Athena Chalinitis (Athena in the Heavens)," etc. In the edition of 1899 the list preceded the Preface and added the particulars of the lectures, as here (p. 289).

Lecture i.—Footnote to heading, the references "Cp. . . . 97" were added in 1883. "Corinthiaca" has hitherto been misprinted "Cainthiaca," and in the Greek the accents have been omitted. The Greek words, moreover, have hitherto been printed as if they came from Pausanias (thus, "Cainthiaca 4, beginning φιλτρον ἱππειον, and Bellerophon's dream, Pind. *Ol.* 13, 97"); they are from Pindar. The necessary corrections have here been made.

§ 2, footnote added in 1883.

§ 11, line 11, eds. 1–3, "and chiefly of sins," altered by the reviser in 1883 to "and of sins, chiefly," but noted by Ruskin in his own copy to stand "as originally printed."

§ 19, line 2, eds. 1–3, "of Milton"; 1883, "of Milton's Lycidas"; the two footnotes were also added in 1883; lines 30, 31, 1883 altered "in leathern bags" to "in a leathern bag," and "like bags" into "like a bag"; and so, in the next line, 1883 altered "they are so" into "it is one," and "them" to "it."

§ 20, the note referring to Pindar was added in 1883.

§ 21, the note was added in 1883.

§ 26, in the note, "By" was changed to "Beside" in 1883; § 26, last lines, before 1883, the quotation from *Hamlet* was not set out in separate lines; see also p. 322 *n.*

§ 29, the note was added in 1883.

§ 36, line 13, "for" added in 1883; line 18, "are" altered to "be."

§ 38 (p. 336), line 14, "containing" was misprinted "containly" in the 1874 edition.

§ 39, the note was added in 1883; line 20, "p. 6" in all previous editions is here corrected to "pl. 6"; lines 20 and 50, "Le Normand" corrected to "Lenormant."

§ 42, in 1883 the note was added referring to the *Art Journal;* to which, in all subsequent editions, has hitherto been added "(Now included in the volumes of collected articles, published under the title of 'On the Old Road')."

§ 44, line 22, see p. 346 *n.*

§ 46, last line, "St." altered in 1883 to "S."

§ 48, line 11, see p. 349 *n.*

Lecture ii.—§ 52, line 6, "may" inserted in 1883.

§ 53, the note was added in 1883.

§ 62, lines 18, 21, 24, "may" was substituted in 1883 for "shall."

§ 68, line 35 and author's footnote, see p. 363 *n.*

§ 71, line 33, "St." altered to "S." (and so in § 105, line 23).

§ 72, line 13, "the" inserted before "symbol."

Digitized by Google

§ 76, the first note was added in 1883.

§ 91, last line, "around for ever" altered in 1883 to "for ever around."

§ 96, lines 12 and 13, "only" transferred in 1883 from before "reaches" to after "splendour."

§ 97, line 2, "are" altered to "be."

§ 111, line 7, "art" (in eds. 1–3) has been misprinted "heart" in all later editions.

Lecture iii.—§ 121, line 15, "was" altered to "were" in 1883.

§ 124, line 11, "for ever" after "destroyed" struck out in 1883.

§ 132, line 19, "only" and "live" transposed.

§§ 172, 174, 175, for the italics see p. 416 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE 291

LECTURE I

ATHENA CHALINITIS (ATHENA IN THE HEAVENS) 295

Lecture on the Greek Myths of Storm, given (partly) in University College, London, March 9th, 1869.

LECTURE II

ATHENA KERAMITIS (ATHENA IN THE EARTH) 351

Study, supplementary to the preceding lecture, of the supposed, and actual, relations of Athena to the vital force in material organism.

LECTURE III

ATHENA ERGANE (ATHENA IN THE HEART) 388

Various Notes relating to the Conception of Athena as the Directress of the Imagination and Will.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

My days and strength have lately been much broken; and I never more felt the insufficiency of both than in preparing for the press the following desultory memoranda on a most noble subject. But I leave them now as they stand, for no time nor labour would be enough to complete them to my contentment; and I believe that they contain suggestions which may be followed with safety, by persons who are beginning to take interest in the aspects of mythology, which only recent investigation has removed from the region of conjecture into that of rational inquiry.[1] I have some advantage, also, from my field work, in the interpretation of myths relating to natural phenomena: and I have had always near me, since we were at college together, a sure, and unweariedly kind, guide, in my friend Charles Newton, to whom we owe the finding of more treasure in mines of marble,[2] than, were it rightly estimated, all California could buy. I must not, however, permit the chance of his name being in any wise associated with my errors. Much of my work has been done obstinately in my own way; and he is never responsible for me, though he has often kept me right, or at least enabled me to advance in a right direction. Absolutely right no one can be in such

[1] [The date, 1869, should be remembered. Ruskin was thinking of the school of comparative mythology founded on philology (see a few lines lower down), not of the later method of anthropology: see the Introduction, p. lxvii.]

[2] [The reference is to Newton's own excavations and discoveries in Calymnos (1854, 1855); of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (1856); and at Cnidus and Branchidae (see his *History of Discoveries at Halicarnassus*, etc., 1863). And, at a later date, to the numerous acquisitions which he made, and the excavations which he directed, as Keeper of the Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum. Ruskin gave £1000 to aid in such researches. For Ruskin's early friendship with Newton, see *Præterita*, i. § 225; ii. § 155.]

Digitized by Google

matters; nor does a day pass without convincing every honest student of antiquity of some partial error, and showing him better how to think, and where to look. But I knew that there was no hope of my being able to enter with advantage on the fields of history opened by the splendid investigation of recent philologists; though I could qualify myself, by attention and sympathy, to understand, here and there, a verse of Homer's or Hesiod's, as the simple people did for whom they sang.

Even while I correct these sheets for press, a lecture by Professor Tyndall has been put into my hands, which I ought to have heard last 16th of January,[1] but was hindered by mischance; and which, I now find, completes, in two important particulars, the evidence of an instinctive truth in ancient symbolism; showing, first, that the Greek conception of an ethereal element pervading space is justified by the closest reasoning of modern physicists;[2] and, secondly, that the blue of the sky, hitherto thought to be caused by watery vapour, is, indeed, reflected from the divided air itself; so that the bright blue of the eyes of Athena, and the deep blue of her ægis, prove to be accurate mythic expressions of natural phenomena which it is an uttermost triumph of recent science to have revealed.

Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine triumph more complete. To form, "within an experimental tube, a bit of more perfect sky than the sky itself!"[3] here is magic of the finest sort! singularly reversed from that of old time, which only asserted its competency to enclose in bottles elementary forces that were—not of the sky.

Let me, in thanking Professor Tyndall for the true wonder of this piece of work, ask his pardon, and that of all masters in physical science, for any words of mine, either

[1] [A lecture at the Royal Institution on Friday, January *15*, 1869, "On Chemical Rays, and the Light of the Sky," printed in the *Notices of Proceedings*, vol. 5, pp. 439–450. On the blue of the sky as reflected light, see especially p. 440.]

[2] [Compare § 10, below; p. 306.]

[3] [See pp. 435, 440, 445, of Tyndall's paper.]

Digitized by Google

in the following pages or elsewhere,[1] that may ever seem to fail in the respect due to their great powers of thought, or in the admiration due to the far scope of their discovery. But I will be judged by themselves, if I have not bitter reason to ask them to teach us more than yet they have taught.

This first day of May, 1869, I am writing where my work was begun thirty-five years ago, within sight of the snows of the higher Alps.[2] In that half of the permitted life of man, I have seen strange evil brought upon every scene that I best loved, or tried to make beloved by others.[3] The light which once flushed those pale summits with its rose at dawn, and purple at sunset, is now umbered and faint; the air which once inlaid the clefts of all their golden crags with azure is now defiled with languid coils of smoke, belched from worse than volcanic fires; their very glacier waves are ebbing, and their snows fading,[4] as if Hell had breathed on them; the waters that once sank at their feet into crystalline rest are now dimmed and foul, from deep to deep, and shore to shore. These are no careless words —they are accurately—horribly—true. I know what the Swiss lakes were; no pool of Alpine fountain at its source was clearer. This morning, on the Lake of Geneva, at half a mile from the beach, I could scarcely see my oar-blade a fathom deep.

The light, the air, the waters, all defiled! How of the earth itself? Take this one fact for type of honour done by the modern Swiss to the earth of his native land. There used to be a little rock at the end of the avenue by the port of Neuchâtel; there, the last marble of the foot of Jura, sloping to the blue water, and (at this time of year)

[1] [See, for instance, §§ 54, 57, 88, pp. 353, 355, 378. For later references to Tyndall in particular, see General Index.]

[2] [See *Præterita*, i. § 194: "The Col de la Faucille, on that day of 1835, opened to me in distinct vision the Holy Land of my future work and true home in this world."]

[3] [See, for instance, Vol. XVIII. pp. 22 *seq.*]

[4] [Compare *Catalogue of the Rudimentary Series*, No. 169; and *Letters to Norton*, vol. ii. p. 107 (reprinted in a later volume of this edition).]

Digitized by Google

covered with bright pink tufts of Saponaria. I went, three days since, to gather a blossom at the place. The goodly native rock and its flowers were covered with the dust and refuse of the town; but, in the middle of the avenue, was a newly-constructed artificial rockery, with a fountain twisted through a spinning spout, and an inscription on one of its loose-tumbled stones,—

"Aux Botanistes,
Le club Jurassique."

Ah, masters of modern science, give me back my Athena out of your vials, and seal, if it may be, once more, Asmodeus therein.[1] You have divided the elements, and united them; enslaved them upon the earth, and discerned them in the stars. Teach us, now, but this of them, which is all that man need know,—that the Air is given to him for his life; and the Rain to his thirst, and for his baptism; and the Fire for warmth; and the Sun for sight; and the Earth for his meat—and his Rest.

VEVAY, *May* 1, 1869.

[1] [For Asmodeus, the evil spirit of destruction, see the Book of Tobit, *Paradise Lost* (iv. 168), and Le Sage's *Asmodeus; or, The Devil on Two Sticks* (*Le Diable Boiteux*); to which latter work reference is here made. "I have been for the last six months enclosed in one of these phials," says Asmodeus in announcing himself, while at the end he says, "The magician who kept me prisoned in my bottle has discovered that I am absent without leave, and prepares e'en now to call me back to his laboratory."]

Digitized by Google

THE QUEEN OF THE AIR

I

ATHENA CHALINITIS*

(*Athena in the Heavens*)

Lecture on the Greek Myths of Storm, given (partly) in University College, London, March 9th, 1869

1. I WILL not ask your pardon for endeavouring to interest you in the subject of Greek Mythology; but I must ask your permission to approach it in a temper differing from that in which it is frequently treated.[1] We cannot justly interpret the religion of any people, unless we are prepared to admit that we ourselves, as well as they, are liable to error in matters of faith; and that the convictions of others, however singular, may in some points have been well founded, while our own, however reasonable, may in some particulars be mistaken. You must forgive me, therefore, for not always distinctively calling the creeds of the past, "superstition," and the creeds of the present day, "religion"; as

* "Athena the Restrainer." The name is given to her as having helped Bellerophon to bridle Pegasus, the flying cloud. *Cp.* Pausanias, *Corinthiaca* 4, and Bellerophon's dream,[2] beginning φίλτρον ἵππειον, Pind. *Ol.* 13, 97.

[1] [See the *Art of England*, § 43, for "the supercilious theory" that "mythology is a temporary form of human folly."]

[2] [The reference to Pausanias, etc., was added in 1883; the exact reference is ii. 4, 1: "Not far from the tomb of Medea's children is a sanctuary of Athena the Bridler. For they say that Athena above all the gods helped Bellerophon," etc. The passage in Pindar tells how Bellerophon, when he sought to bridle Pegasus, suffered many things, until Athena visited him in a dream and said, "Come, take this charm over horses (φίλτρον ἵππειον)," etc. For Pegasus, as the flying cloud, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 185).]

Digitized by Google

well as for assuming that a faith now confessed may sometimes be superficial, and that a faith long forgotten may once have been sincere. It is the task of the Divine to condemn the errors of antiquity, and of the Philologist to account for them: I will only pray you to read, with patience and human sympathy, the thoughts of men who lived without blame in a darkness they could not dispel; and to remember that, whatever charge of folly may justly attach to the saying,—"There is no God,"[1] the folly is prouder, deeper, and less pardonable, in saying, "There is no God but for me."[2]

2. A myth, in its simplest definition, is a story with a meaning attached to it, other than it seems to have at first;[3] and the fact that it has such a meaning is generally marked by some of its circumstances being extraordinary, or, in the common use of the word, unnatural. Thus, if I tell you that Hercules killed a water-serpent in the lake of Lerna,[4] and if I mean, and you understand, nothing more than that fact, the story, whether true or false, is not a myth. But if by telling you this, I mean that Hercules purified the stagnation of many streams from deadly miasmata, my story, however simple, is a true myth; only, as, if I left it in that simplicity, you would probably look for nothing beyond, it will be wise in me to surprise your attention by adding some singular circumstance; for instance, that the water-snake had several heads, which revived as fast as they were killed, and which poisoned even the foot that trode upon them as they slept. And in proportion to the fulness of intended meaning I shall probably multiply and refine upon these improbabilities; as, suppose, if, instead of desiring only to tell you that Hercules purified a marsh, I wished you to understand that he contended with the venom and vapour of envy and evil ambition, whether

[1] [Psalms liii. 1.]
[2] [Compare Ruskin's note of 1883 in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 330).]
[3] [For the way in which "all great myths are founded, partly on physical, partly on moral fact," see *Proserpina*, ii. ch. i. § 45.]
[4] [See below, § 4.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

~~importance~~ . in

l . to ~~[illegible]~~

n you are listening

telling you what

s be true . and or

been so ; true to some extent or

ho is hiding

n the ~~[illegible]~~ ~~events~~ grotesque of

l more likely

true one

~~[illegible] case than the~~

pedulous

~~faithful~~ persons

than philosophers.

ortance that when

itinuing , you should

el not efface under

iated.

n ingenuity may

tory

may ~~be~~ contain .

ordinary fact have

le light which it

the people by

OF THE AIR" (§ 3)

p. 297

Digitized by Google

in other men's souls or in his own, and choked *that* malaria only by supreme toil—I might tell you that this serpent was formed by the Goddess whose pride was in the trial of Hercules; and that its place of abode was by a palm* tree; and that for every head of it that was cut off, two rose up with renewed life; and that the hero found at last he could not kill the creature at all by cutting its heads off or crushing them; but only by burning them down; and that the midmost of them could not be killed even that way, but had to be buried alive. Only, in proportion as I mean more I shall certainly appear more absurd in my statement,[1] and at last, when I get unendurably significant, all practical persons will agree that I was talking mere nonsense from the beginning, and never meant anything at all.

8. It is just possible, however, also, that the story-teller may all along have meant nothing but what he said; and that, incredible as the events may appear, he himself literally believed—and expected you also to believe—all this about Hercules, without any latent moral or history whatever. And it is very necessary, in reading traditions of this kind, to determine, first of all, whether you are listening to a simple person, who is relating what, at all events, he believes to be true (and may, therefore, possibly have been so to some extent), or to a reserved philosopher, who is veiling a theory of the universe under the grotesque of a fairy tale. It is, in general, more likely that the first supposition should be the right one:—simple and credulous persons are, perhaps fortunately, more common than philosophers: and it is of the highest importance that you should take their innocent testimony as it was meant, and not efface, under the graceful explanation which your cultivated ingenuity

* *Plane* in Pausanias, vol. i. 371—with Pisander of Camirus for author of legend.[2] [1883.]

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 71.]
[2] [Pausanias, ii. 37, 4.]

Digitized by Google

may suggest, either the evidence their story may contain (such as it is worth) of an extraordinary event having really taken place, or the unquestionable light which it will cast upon the character of the person by whom it was frankly believed. And to deal with Greek religion honestly, you must at once understand that this literal belief was, in the mind of the general people, as deeply rooted as ours in the legends of our own sacred book; and that a basis of unmiraculous event was as little suspected, and an explanatory symbolism as rarely traced, by them, as by us.

You must, therefore, observe that I deeply degrade the position which such a myth as that just referred to occupied in the Greek mind, by comparing it (for fear of offending you) to our story of St. George and the Dragon. Still, the analogy is perfect in minor respects; and though it fails to give you any notion of the vitally religious earnestness of the Greek faith, it will exactly illustrate the manner in which faith laid hold of its objects.

4. This story of Hercules and the Hydra, then, was to the general Greek mind, in its best days, a tale about a real hero and a real monster. Not one in a thousand knew anything of the way in which the story had arisen, any more than the English peasant generally is aware of the plebeian origin of St. George;[1] or supposes that there were once alive in the world, with sharp teeth and claws, real, and very ugly, flying dragons. On the other hand, few persons traced any moral or symbolical meaning in the story, and the average Greek was as far from imagining any interpretation like that I have just given you, as an average Englishman is from seeing in St. George the Red Cross Knight of Spenser, or in the dragon the Spirit of Infidelity. But, for all that, there was a certain undercurrent of consciousness in all minds, that the figures meant

[1] [Ruskin had written in his copy here, "Note wanted." In *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 26, he disentangles the story of George, the bacon seller, from the true saint, who, on the other hand, was born of noble parents, though "husbandman by name": see *St. Mark's Rest*, §§ 214 *seq.*, where a further discussion of the legend of St. George is given (by Mr. James Reddie Anderson).]

Digitized by Google

more than they at first showed; and according to each man's own faculties of sentiment, he judged and read them; just as a Knight of the Garter reads more in the jewel on his collar than the George and Dragon of a public-house expresses to the host or to his customers. Thus, to the mean person the myth always meant little; to the noble person, much: and the greater their familiarity with it, the more contemptible it became to the one, and the more sacred to the other: until vulgar commentators explained it entirely away, while Virgil made it the crowning glory of his choral hymn to Hercules:

> "Around thee, powerless to infect thy soul,
> Rose, in his crested crown, the Lerna worm."

> "Non te rationis egentem
> Lernæus turbâ capitum circumstetit anguis."[1]

And although, in any special toil of the hero's life, the moral interpretation was rarely with definiteness attached to its event, yet in the whole course of the life, not only a symbolical meaning, but the warrant for the existence of a real spiritual power, was apprehended of all men. Hercules was no dead hero, to be remembered only as a victor over monsters of the past—harmless now, as slain. He was the perpetual type and mirror of heroism, and its present and living aid against every ravenous form of human trial and pain.

5. But, if we seek to know more than this, and to ascertain the manner in which the story first crystallized into its shape, we shall find ourselves led back generally to one or other of two sources—either to actual historical events, represented by the fancy under figures personifying them; or else to natural phenomena similarly endowed with life by the imaginative power, usually more or less under the influence of terror. The historical myths we must leave the masters of history to follow; they, and the events they record, being yet involved in great, though attractive and

[1] [*Æneid*, viii. 300. Ruskin quoted the lines on a fly-leaf, describing the drawings shown at his lecture on Snakes (1880), there, however, giving Dryden's translation (see the later volume containing *Deucalion*).]

Digitized by Google

penetrable, mystery. But the stars, and hills, and storms are with us now, as they were with others of old; and it only needs that we look at them with the earnestness of those childish eyes to understand the first words spoken of them by the children of men. And then, in all the most beautiful and enduring myths, we shall find, not only a literal story of a real person,—not only a parallel imagery of moral principle,—but an underlying worship of natural phenomena, out of which both have sprung, and in which both for ever remain rooted. Thus, from the real sun, rising and setting;—from the real atmosphere, calm in its dominion of unfading blue, and fierce in its descent of tempest,—the Greek forms, first, the idea of two entirely personal and corporeal gods, whose limbs are clothed in divine flesh, and whose brows are crowned with divine beauty; yet so real that the quiver rattles at their shoulder, and the chariot bends beneath their weight. And on the other hand, collaterally with these corporeal images, and never for one instant separated from them, he conceives also two omnipresent spiritual influences, of which one illuminates, as the sun, with a constant fire, whatever in humanity is skilful and wise; and the other, like the living air, breathes the calm of heavenly fortitude, and strength of righteous anger, into every human breast that is pure and brave.

6. Now, therefore, in nearly every myth of importance, and certainly in every one of those of which I shall speak to-night, you have to discern these three structural parts[1]—the root and the two branches:—the root, in physical existence, sun, or sky, or cloud, or sea; then the personal incarnation of that; becoming a trusted and companionable deity, with whom you may walk hand in hand, as a child with its brother or its sister; and, lastly, the moral significance of the image, which is in all the great myths eternally and beneficently true.

[1] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, § 111, Vol. XVIII. pp. 347–348; and *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 184 (Vol. XX.).]

Digitized by Google

7. The great myths; that is to say, myths made by great people. For the first plain fact about myth-making is one which has been most strangely lost sight of,—that you cannot make a myth unless you have something to make it of. You cannot tell a secret which you don't know. If the myth is about the sky, it must have been made by somebody who had looked at the sky. If the myth is about justice and fortitude, it must have been made by some one who knew what it was to be just or patient. According to the quantity of understanding in the person will be the quantity of significance in his fable; and the myth of a simple and ignorant race must necessarily mean little, because a simple and ignorant race have little to mean. So the great question in reading a story is always, not what wild hunter dreamed, or what childish race first dreaded it; but what wise man first perfectly told, and what strong people first perfectly lived by it. And the real meaning of any myth is that which it has at the noblest age of the nation among whom it is current.[1] The farther back you pierce, the less significance you will find, until you come to the first narrow thought, which, indeed, contains the germ of the accomplished tradition; but only as the seed contains the flower. As the intelligence and passion of the race develop, they cling to and nourish their beloved and sacred legend; leaf by leaf, it expands, under the touch of more pure affections, and more delicate imagination, until at last the perfect fable burgeons out into symmetry of milky stem, and honeyed bell.

8. But through whatever changes it may pass, remember that our right reading of it is wholly dependent on the materials we have in our own minds for an intelligent answering sympathy. If it first arose among a people who dwelt under stainless skies, and measured their journeys by ascending and declining stars, we certainly cannot read

[1] [Compare *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 71: "a great myth can only be written in the central time of a nation's power."]

Digitized by Google

their story, if we have never seen anything above us in the day but smoke; nor anything round us in the night but candles. If the tale goes on to change clouds or planets into living creatures,—to invest them with fair forms—and inflame them with mighty passions, we can only understand the story of the human-hearted things, in so far as we ourselves take pleasure in the perfectness of visible form, or can sympathise, by an effort of imagination, with the strange people who had other loves than that of wealth, and other interests than those of commerce. And, lastly, if the myth complete itself to the fulfilled thoughts of the nation, by attributing to the gods, whom they have carved out of their fantasy, continual presence with their own souls; and their every effort for good is finally guided by the sense of the companionship, the praise, and the pure will of Immortals, we shall be able to follow them into this last circle of their faith only in the degree in which the better parts of our own beings have been also stirred by the aspects of nature, or strengthened by her laws. It may be easy to prove that the ascent of Apollo in his chariot signifies nothing but the rising of the sun. But what does the sunrise itself signify to us? If only languid return to frivolous amusement, or fruitless labour, it will, indeed, not be easy for us to conceive the power, over a Greek, of the name of Apollo. But if, for us also, as for the Greek, the sunrise means daily restoration to the sense of passionate gladness, and of perfect life—if it means the thrilling of new strength through every nerve,—the shedding over us of a better peace than the peace of night, in the power of the dawn, —and the purging of evil vision and fear by the baptism of its dew; if the sun itself is an influence, to us also, of spiritual good—and becomes thus in reality, not in imagination, to us also, a spiritual power,—we may then soon over-pass the narrow limit of conception which kept that power impersonal, and rise with the Greek to the thought of an angel who rejoiced as a strong man to run

Digitized by Google

his course, whose voice, calling to life and to labour, rang round the earth, and whose going forth was to the ends of heaven.[1]

9. The time, then, at which I shall take up for you, as well as I can decipher it, the tradition of the Gods of Greece, shall be near the beginning of its central and formed faith,—about 500 B.C.,—a faith of which the character is perfectly represented by Pindar and Æschylus, who are both of them out-spokenly religious, and entirely sincere men; while we may always look back to find the less developed thought of the preceding epoch given by Homer, in a more occult, subtle, half-instinctive and involuntary way.

10. Now, at that culminating period of the Greek religion we find, under one governing Lord of all things, four subordinate elemental forces, and four spiritual powers living in them, and commanding them. The elements are of course the well-known four of the ancient world—the earth, the waters, the fire, and the air; and the living powers of them are Demeter, the Latin Ceres; Poseidon, the Latin Neptune; Apollo, who has retained always his Greek name; and Athena, the Latin Minerva. Each of these is descended from, or changed from, more ancient, and therefore more mystic deities of the earth and heaven, and of a finer element of æther supposed to be beyond the heavens;* but at this time we find the four quite definite, both in their kingdoms and in their personalities. They are the rulers of the earth that we tread upon, and the air that we breathe; and are with us as closely, in their vivid humanity, as the dust that they animate, and the winds that they bridle. I shall briefly define for you the range of their separate dominions, and then follow, as far

* And by modern science now also asserted, and with probability argued, to exist.[2]

[1] [Psalms xix. 5, 6 (Prayer-book version).]
[2] [See the Preface; above, p. 292.]

Digitized by Google

as we have time, the most interesting of the legends which relate to the queen of the air.

11. The rule of the first spirit, Demeter, the earth mother, is over the earth, first, as the origin of all life—the dust from whence we were taken:[1] secondly, as the receiver of all things back at last into silence—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."[2] And, therefore, as the most tender image of this appearing and fading life, in the birth and fall of flowers,[3] her daughter Proserpine plays in the fields of Sicily, and thence is torn away into darkness, and becomes the Queen of Fate—not merely of death, but of the gloom which closes over and ends, not beauty only, but sin; and chiefly of sins, the sin against the life she gave: so that she is, in her highest power, Persephone, the avenger and purifier of blood,—"The voice of thy brother's blood cries to me *out of the ground*."[4] Then, side by side with this queen of the earth, we find a demigod of agriculture by the plough—the lord of grain, or of the thing ground by the mill. And it is a singular proof of the simplicity of Greek character at this noble time, that of all representations left to us of their deities by their art, few are so frequent, and none perhaps so beautiful, as the symbol of this spirit of agriculture.[5]

12. Then the dominant spirit of the element of water is Neptune, but subordinate to him are myriads of other water spirits, of whom Nereus is the chief, with Palæmon, and Leucothea, the "white lady" of the sea; and Thetis, and nymphs innumerable, who, like her, could "suffer a sea change,"[6] while the river deities had each independent power, according to the preciousness of their streams to the cities fed by them,—the "fountain Arethuse, and thou,

[1] [For another reference to Demeter in this sense, see *Munera Pulveris*, Vol. XVII. p. 201.]
[2] [Genesis iii. 19.]
[3] [On the myth of Proserpine, compare Vol. VII. p. 474.]
[4] [Genesis iv. 10.]
[5] [For a representation of Triptolemus in his chariot, see *Aratra Pentelici* (§ 68).]
[6] [*Tempest*, i. 2 (song).]

Digitized by Google

honoured flood, smooth sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds."[1] And, spiritually, this king of the waters is lord of the strength and daily flow of human life—he gives it material force and victory; which is the meaning of the dedication of the hair, as the sign of the strength of life, to the river of the native land.[2]

13. Demeter, then, over the earth, and its giving and receiving of life. Neptune over the waters, and the flow and force of life,—always among the Greeks typified by the horse, which was to them as a crested sea-wave, animated and bridled. Then the third element, fire, has set over it two powers: over earthly fire, the assistant of human labour, is set Hephæstus,[3] lord of all labour in which is the flush and the sweat of the brow; and over heavenly fire, the source of day, is set Apollo, the spirit of all kindling, purifying, and illuminating intellectual wisdom; each of these gods having also their subordinate or associated powers—servant, or sister, or companion muse.

14. Then, lastly, we come to the myth which is to be our subject of closer inquiry—the story of Athena and of the deities subordinate to her. This great goddess, the Neith of the Egyptians,[4] the Athena or Athenaia of the Greeks, and, with broken power, half usurped by Mars, the Minerva of the Latins, is, physically, the queen of the air; having supreme power both over its blessings of calm, and wrath of storm; and spiritually, she is the queen of the breath of man, first of the bodily breathing which is life to his blood, and strength to his arm in battle; and then of the mental breathing, or inspiration, which is his moral health and habitual wisdom; wisdom of conduct and of the heart, as opposed to the wisdom of imagination and

[1] [*Lycidas*, 85, 86.]

[2] [As by Achilles: see below, § 37, p. 333. In the Elgin Room at the British Museum there is a Votive Relief (No. 798) with two plaits of twisted hair dedicated to Poseidon; for references to like customs in other races, see Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. iv. p. 393.]

[3] [See below, § 38, p. 334; and compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 12 (above, p. 65).]

[4] [See *Sesame and Lilies*, § 62, and *Ethics of the Dust* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 118, 364).]

Digitized by Google

the brain; moral, as distinct from intellectual; inspired, as distinct from illuminated.

15. By a singular, and fortunate, though I believe wholly accidental coincidence, the heart-virtue, of which she is the spirit, was separated by the ancients into four divisions, which have since obtained acceptance from all men as rightly discerned, and have received, as if from the quarters of the four winds of which Athena is the natural queen, the name of "Cardinal" virtues: namely, Prudence, (the right seeing, and foreseeing, of events through darkness); Justice, (the righteous bestowal of favour and of indignation); Fortitude, (patience under trial by pain); and Temperance, (patience under trial by pleasure). With respect to these four virtues, the attributes of Athena are all distinct. In her prudence, or sight in darkness, she is "Glaukopis," owl-eyed.* In her justice, which is the dominant virtue, she wears two robes, one of light and one of darkness; the robe of light, saffron colour, or the colour of the daybreak, falls to her feet, covering her wholly with favour and love,—the calm of the sky in blessing; it is embroidered along its edge with her victory over the giants,[1] (the troublous powers of the earth,) and the likeness of it was woven yearly by the Athenian maidens and carried to the temple of their own Athena,—not to the Parthenon, that was the temple of all the world's Athena,—but this they carried to the temple of their own only one,[2] who loved them, and stayed with them always. Then her robe of indignation is worn on her breast and left arm only, fringed with fatal serpents, and fastened with Gorgonian cold, turning men to stone; physically, the lightning and the hail of chastisement by storm. Then in her fortitude she wears

* There are many other meanings in the epithet; see, farther on, § 91, p. 379.

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 106.]
[2] [That is, to the temple of Athene Polias: see below, p. 334 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Athena

(From a Statue from Herculaneum)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

the crested and unstooping helmet;* and lastly, in her temperance, she is the queen of maidenhood — stainless as the air of heaven.

16. But all these virtues mass themselves in the Greek mind into the two main ones—of Justice, or noble passion, and Fortitude, or noble patience; and of these, the chief powers of Athena, the Greeks had divinely written for them, and for all men after them, two mighty songs,—one, of the Menis,† mens, passion, or zeal, of Athena, breathed into a mortal whose name is "Ache of heart," and whose short life is only the incarnate brooding and burst of storm; and the other is of the foresight and fortitude of Athena, maintained by her in the heart of a mortal whose name is given to him from a longer grief, Odysseus the full of sorrow, the much-enduring, and the long-suffering.[1]

17. The minor expressions by the Greeks in word, in symbol, and in religious service, of this faith, are so many and so beautiful, that I hope some day to gather at least a few of them into a separate body of evidence respecting the power of Athena, and its relations to the ethical conception of the Homeric poems, or rather, to their ethical nature; for they are not conceived didactically, but are didactic in their essence, as all good art is.[2] There is an increasing insensibility to this character, and even an open denial of it, among us, now, which is one of the most curious errors of modernism, — the peculiar and judicial blindness of an age which, having long practised art and poetry for the sake of pleasure only, has become incapable

* I am compelled, for clearness' sake, to mark only one meaning at a time. Athena's helmet is sometimes a mask—sometimes a sign of anger—sometimes of the highest light of æther: but I cannot speak of all this at once.

† This first word of the *Iliad*, Menis, afterwards passes into the Latin Mens; is the root of the Latin name for Athena, "Minerva," and so of the English "mind."

[1] [For other remarks on the name Odysseus, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 273), where Ruskin preferred to take it as meaning "the angry."]

[2] [On this point compare § 108; below, p. 394.]

Digitized by Google

of reading their language when they were both didactic: and also having been itself accustomed to a professedly didactic teaching, which yet, for private interests, studiously avoids collision with every prevalent vice of its day (and especially with avarice), has become equally dead to the intensely ethical conceptions of a race which habitually divided all men into two broad classes of worthy or worthless;—good and good for nothing. And even the celebrated passage of Horace about the *Iliad*[1] is now misread or disbelieved, as if it was impossible that the *Iliad* could be instructive because it is not like a sermon. Horace does not say that it is like a sermon, and would have been still less likely to say so, if he ever had had the advantage of hearing a sermon. "I having been reading that story of Troy again" (thus he writes to a noble youth of Rome whom he cared for), "quietly at Præneste, while you have been busy at Rome; and truly I think that what is base and what is noble, and what useful and useless, may be better learned from that than from all Chrysippus' and Crantor's[2] talk put together."* Which is profoundly true, not of the *Iliad* only, but of all other great art whatsoever; for all pieces of such art are didactic in the purest way, indirectly and occultly, so that, first, you shall only be bettered by them if you are already hard at work in bettering yourself; and when you *are* bettered by them it shall be partly with a general acceptance of their influence, so constant and subtle that you shall be no more conscious of it than of the healthy digestion of food; and partly by a gift of unexpected truth, which you shall only find by slow mining for it;—which is withheld on purpose, and close-locked, that you may not get it till you have forged the key of it in a furnace of your own heating.

* Note, once for all, that unless when there is question about some particular expression, I never translate literally, but give the real force of what is said, as I best can, freely.

[1] [*Epistles*, i. 2.]
[2] [See Vol. XVIII. p 159 n., where the passage is cited.]

Digitized by Google

And this withholding of their meaning is continual, and confessed, in the great poets.[1] Thus Pindar says of himself: "There is many an arrow in my quiver, full of speech to the wise, but, for the many, they need interpreters."[2] And neither Pindar, nor Æschylus, nor Hesiod, nor Homer, nor any of the greater poets or teachers of any nation or time, ever spoke but with intentional reservation: nay, beyond this, there is often a meaning which they themselves cannot interpret,—which it may be for ages long after them to interpret,—in what they said, so far as it recorded true imaginative vision. For all the greatest myths have been seen, by the men who tell them, involuntarily and passively[3]—seen by them with as great distinctness (and in some respects, though not in all, under conditions as far beyond the control of their will) as a dream sent to any of us by night when we dream clearest; and it is this veracity of vision that could not be refused, and of moral that could not be foreseen, which in modern historical inquiry has been left wholly out of account: being indeed the thing which no merely historical investigator can understand, or even believe; for it belongs exclusively to the creative or artistic group of men, and can only be interpreted by those of their race, who themselves in some measure also see visions and dream dreams.[4]

So that you may obtain a more truthful idea of the nature of Greek religion and legend from the poems of Keats, and the nearly as beautiful, and, in general grasp of subject, far more powerful, recent work of Morris,[5] than from frigid scholarship, however extensive. Not that the poet's impressions or renderings of things are wholly true, but their truth is vital, not formal. They are like sketches

[1] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 12 (above, p. 63); and see Carlyle's comment on this passage in the Introduction, above, p. lxx.]

[2] [*Olympia*, ii. 83–86.]

[3] [On this involuntariness, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 115 and 116 *n.*]

[4] [Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17.]

[5] [William Morris had published *The Life and Death of Jason* in 1867, and the first portion of *The Earthly Paradise* in 1868.]

Digitized by Google

from life by Reynolds or Gainsborough, which may be demonstrably inaccurate or imaginary in many traits, and indistinct in others, yet will be in the deepest sense like, and true; while the work of historical analysis is too often weak with loss, through the very labour of its miniature touches, or useless in clumsy and vapid veracity of externals, and complacent security of having done all that is required for the portrait, when it has measured the breadth of the forehead, and the length of the nose.

18. The first of requirements, then, for the right reading of myths, is the understanding of the nature of all true vision by noble persons;[1] namely, that it is founded on constant laws common to all human nature; that it perceives, however darkly, things which are for all ages true; —that we can only understand it so far as we have some perception of the same truth;—and that its fulness is developed and manifested more and more by the reverberation of it from minds of the same mirror-temper, in succeeding ages. You will understand Homer better by seeing his reflection in Dante, as you may trace new forms and softer colours in a hillside, redoubled by a lake.

I shall be able partly to show you, even to-night, how much, in the Homeric vision of Athena, has been made clearer by the advance of time, being thus essentially and eternally true; but I must in the outset indicate the relation to that central thought of the imagery of the inferior deities of storm.

19. And first I will take the myth of Æolus (the "sage Hippotades" of Milton's *Lycidas*[2]), as it is delivered pure by Homer from the early times.

Why do you suppose Milton calls him "sage"? One does not usually think of the winds as very thoughtful or

[1] [Compare *Proserpina*, ii. ch. i. § 45.]
[2] [Æolus, son of Hippotes. Line 96 :—

"And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings."]

Digitized by Google

deliberate powers. But hear Homer:[1] "Then we came to the Æolian island, and there dwelt Æolus Hippotades, dear to the deathless gods: there he dwelt in a floating island, and round it was a wall of brass that could not be broken; and the smooth rock of it ran up sheer. To whom twelve children were born in the sacred chamber—six daughters and six strong sons; and they dwell for ever with their beloved father, and their mother strict in duty; and with them are laid up a thousand benefits; and the misty house around them rings with fluting all the day long." * Now, you are to note first, in this description, the wall of brass and the sheer rock. You will find, throughout the fables of the tempest-group, that the brazen wall and precipice (occurring in another myth as the brazen tower of Danaë)[2] are always connected with the idea of the towering cloud lighted by the sun, here truly described as a floating island. Secondly, you hear that all treasures were laid up in them; therefore, you know this Æolus is lord of the beneficent winds ("he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries"[3]);

* Conf. Eurip. *Bacch.*, 144, 147. [1883.[4]]

[1] [*Odyssey*, x. 1–10.]

[2] [For which myth, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 184–185 *n.*).]

[3] [Psalms cxxxv. 7.]

[4] [Ruskin, in interpreting the passage from Homer as meant to be applicable in all details to the winds, translates differently from most other commentators, who take *ὀνείατα* to mean not "benefits" or "treasures," but "dainties." So, again, in the last line (*κνισσῆεν δέ τε δῶμα περιστεναχίζεται αὐλῇ*) Ruskin reads as just given, and takes the last word to mean "with the sound of fluting" (the whistling of the wind), and interprets *κνισσῆεν* in a meteorological sense as "misty." The alternative version reads *αὐλῇ* ("in the courtyard"), and interprets *κνισσῆεν*, in accordance with the culinary rendering of *ὀνείατα*, as "steaming"; thus Butcher and Lang translate, "And dainties innumerable lie ready to their hands. And the house is full of the savour of feasting, and the noise thereof rings round, yea in the courtyard, by day." See further on this passage, above; the Introduction, p. lxix. Professor Norton, in correspondence with Ruskin, seems to have questioned the interpretation in the text and preferred the usual rendering. Ruskin replied that meat smoke is precisely what would be carried away in a house of the winds: "the house being full of the smell of dinner is precisely the *Unwindiest* character you could have given it. . . . While the *Calm* cloud is high in heaven, the Wind cloud rises up from the earth, and is actually the Steam of it, under the beneficent cookery of the winds, which make it good for food: 'Thy Dwelling shall be of the Dew of Heaven, and of the *fatness* of the Earth'" (*Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. ii. p. 21, reprinted in a later volume of this edition). The reference to Euripides was inserted in 1883 from Ruskin's notes, and illustrates further what he had in his mind. In the lines of the *Bacchæ* the chorus is

Digitized by Google

and presently afterwards Homer calls him the "steward" of the winds,[1] the master of the storehouse of them. And this idea of gifts and preciousness in the winds of heaven is carried out in the well-known sequel of the fable:—Æolus gives them to Ulysses, all but one, bound in a leathern bag,[2] with a glittering cord of silver; and so like a bag of treasures that the sailors think it is one, and open it to see. And when Ulysses is thus driven back to Æolus, and prays him again to help him, note the deliberate words of the King's refusal,—"Did I not," he says, "send thee on thy way heartily, that thou mightest reach thy country, thy home, and whatever is dear to thee? It is not lawful for me again to send forth favourably on his journey a man hated by the happy gods."[3] This idea of the beneficence of Æolus remains to the latest times, though Virgil, by adopting the vulgar change of the cloud island into Lipari,* has lost it a little; but even when it is finally explained away by Diodorus, Æolus is still a kind-hearted monarch, who lived on the coast of Sorrento, invented the use of sails, and established a system of storm signals.[4]

20. Another beneficent storm-power, Boreas, occupies an important place in early legend, and a singularly principal one in art;[5] and I wish I could read to you a passage of

* Conf. *Æn.*, viii. 416. [1883.]

singing the mystic song of the worship of the god; and in lines 144–147 says, "and the plain flows with milk, flows with wine, flows with the nectar of bees, and there is a smoke as of Syrian incense." Compare Ruskin's note in the *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 183 (Vol. XX.), where he says that Semele (as the rain-cloud) is called Thyone (which word he connects with the idea of burnt-sacrifice, θύω), because "she rises as burnt incense expanding in the air."]

[1] [ταμίην ἀνέμων—*Odyssey*, x. 21.]

[2] [But it was only "the blustering winds," βυκτάων ἀνέμων κέλευθα (*Odyssey*, x. 20), that Æolus had tied up. "That is indeed an important mistake about the bag," wrote Ruskin to Professor Norton. "Of course these stories are all first fixed in my mind by my boy's reading of Pope—then I read in the Greek rapidly to hunt out the points I want to work on, and am always liable to miss an immaterial point. But it is strange that I hardly ever get anything stated without some grave mistake, however true in my main discoveries" (*Letters to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. ii. p. 20).]

[3] [*Odyssey*, x. 65, 66, 72, 73.]

[4] [See Diodorus Siculus, v. 7 *ad fin.*]

[5] [A very beautiful representation of this subject—a favourite one with Greek artists—may be seen on a bronze relief in the British Museum (No. 310); it is one of those discovered by Ruskin's friend, Newton (see his *Travels*, vol. i. p. 330).]

Digitized by Google

Plato[1] about the legend of Boreas and Oreithyia,* and the breeze and shade of the Ilissus—notwithstanding its severe reflection upon persons who waste their time on mythological studies; but I must go on at once to the fable with which you are all generally familiar,—that of the Harpies.

This is always connected with that of Boreas or the north wind, because the two sons of Boreas are enemies of the Harpies, and drive them away into frantic flight.† The myth in its first literal form means only the battle between the fair north wind and the foul south one: the two Harpies, "Storm-swift," and "Swiftfoot," are the sisters of the rainbow[2]—that is to say, they are the broken drifts of the showery south wind, and the clear north wind drives them back; but they quickly take a deeper and more malignant significance. You know the short, violent, spiral gusts that lift the dust before coming rain: the Harpies get identified first with these, and then with more violent whirlwinds, and so they are called "Harpies," "the Snatchers," and are thought of as entirely destructive; their manner of destroying being twofold—by snatching away, and by defiling and polluting. This is a month[3] in which you may really see a small Harpy at her work almost whenever you choose. The first time that there is threatening of rain after two or three days of fine weather, leave your window

* Translated by Max Müller in the opening of his essay on "Comparative Mythology." (*Chips from a German Workshop;* vol. ii.)

† Zetes and Calaïs, Pind. *Pyth.*, 4, 324, have *rough purple* (*i.e.*, fiery) wings. [1883.[4]]

---

[1] [See *Phædrus*, 229 B. and C.]

[2] [See Hesiod: *Theogony*, 265–269: "And Thaumas wedded Electra, daughter of deep-flowing Ocean; she bare rapid Iris, and the fair-tressed Harpies, Aello and Ocypete, who accompany the wind-blasts and birds, with swift wings, for they fly high above the earth." *Aello*, "storm-swift" (ἀελλα, a stormy wind); *Ocypete*, "swift-flying." But already in Homer the "more malignant significance" is present: see *Odyssey*, i. 241—"but now the harpies (spirits of the storm) have swept him away inglorious"—and compare *ibid.*, xx. 66, 77.]

[3] [The lecture was delivered on March 9.]

[4] ["Willingly and with glad heart their father Boreas, king of winds, harnessed Zetes and Calaïs, men both with purple wings shooting from their backs." For the meaning of "purple," see below, p. 330.]

Digitized by Google

well open to the street, and some books or papers on the table; and if you do not, in a little while, know what the Harpies mean; and how they snatch, and how they defile, I'll give up my Greek myths.

21. That is the physical meaning. It is now easy to find the mental one. You must all have felt the expression of ignoble anger in those fitful gusts of sudden storm. There is a sense of provocation and apparent bitterness of purpose in their thin and senseless fury, wholly different from the noble anger of the greater tempests. Also, they seem useless and unnatural, and the Greek thinks of them always as vile in malice, and opposed, therefore, to the sons of Boreas, who are kindly winds, that fill sails, and wave harvests,—full of bracing health and happy impulses.* From this lower and merely malicious temper, the Harpies rise into a greater terror, always associated with their whirling motion, which is indeed indicative of the most destructive winds: and they are thus related to the nobler tempests, as Charybdis to the sea;[1] they are devouring and desolating, merciless, making all things disappear that come in their grasp: and so, spiritually, they are the gusts of vexatious, fretful, lawless passion, vain and over-shadowing, discontented and lamenting, meagre and insane,—spirits of wasted energy, and wandering disease, and unappeased famine, and unsatisfied hope. So you have, on the one side, the winds of prosperity and health, on the other, of ruin and sickness. Understand that, once, deeply—any who have ever known the weariness of vain desires; the pitiful, unconquerable, coiling and recoiling, and self-involved returns of some sickening famine and thirst of heart:—and you will know

* Conf. Refreshment of Sarpedon, *Il.* v. 697. [1883.[2]]

---

[1] [For Charybdis, see *Munera Pulveris*, § 86 (Vol. XVII. p. 208).]

[2] [In Pope's version:—

"The fainting soul stood ready winged for flight,
And o'er his eyeballs swam the shades of night;
But Boreas rising fresh, with gentle breath,
Recalled his spirit from the gates of death."]

Digitized by Google

what was in the sound of the Harpy Celæno's shriek from her rock;[1] and why, in the seventh circle of the *Inferno*, the Harpies make their nests in the warped branches of the trees that are the souls of suicides.[2]

22. Now you must always be prepared to read Greek legends as you trace threads through figures on a silken damask: the same thread runs through the web, but it makes part of different figures. Joined with other colours you hardly recognize it, and in different lights it is dark or light. Thus the Greek fables blend and cross curiously in different directions, till they knit themselves into an arabesque where sometimes you cannot tell black from purple, nor blue from emerald—they being all the truer for this, because the truths of emotion they represent are interwoven in the same way, but all the more difficult to read, and to explain in any order. Thus the Harpies, as they represent vain desire, are connected with the Sirens, who are the spirits of constant desire: so that it is difficult sometimes in early art to know which are meant, both being represented alike as birds with women's heads: only the Sirens are the great constant desires—the infinite sicknesses of heart—which, rightly placed, give life, and, wrongly placed, waste it away; so that there are two groups of Sirens, one noble and saving, as the other is fatal. But there are no animating or saving Harpies; their nature is always vexing and full of weariness, and thus they are curiously connected with the whole group of legends about Tantalus.

23. We all know what it is to be tantalized; but we do not often think of asking what Tantalus was tantalized for—what he had done, to be for ever kept hungry in sight of food? Well; he had not been condemned to this merely for being a glutton. By Dante the same punishment is assigned to simple gluttony, to purge it away;[3]—

[1] [*Æneid*, iii. 245 *seq.*]
[2] [*Inferno*, xiii. 10, 94–108: compare Vol. V. p. 273; Vol. XVII. p. 215; and Vol. XVIII. p. 367 *n.*]
[3] [*Purgatorio*, xxii.–xxiv.]

Digitized by Google

but the sins of Tantalus were of a much wider and more mysterious kind. There are four great sins attributed to him[1]—one, stealing the food of the Gods to give it to men: another, sacrificing his son to feed the Gods themselves (it may remind you for a moment of what I was telling you[2] of the earthly character of Demeter, that, while the other Gods all refuse, she, dreaming about her lost daughter, eats part of the shoulder of Pelops before she knows what she is doing); another sin is, telling the secrets of the Gods; and only the fourth—stealing the golden dog of Pandareos—is connected with gluttony. The special sense of this myth is marked by Pandareos receiving the happy privilege of never being troubled with indigestion;[3] the dog, in general, however, mythically represents all utterly senseless and carnal desires, mainly that of gluttony; and in the mythic sense of Hades—that is to say, so far as it represents spiritual ruin in this life, and not a literal hell—the dog Cerberus is its gate-keeper—with this special marking of his character of sensual passion, that he fawns on all those who descend, but rages against all who would return (the Virgilian "facilis descensus"[4] being a later recognition of this mythic character of Hades):

[1] [Of the legends of Tantalus here mentioned, the first is to be found in Pindar, *Olymp.* i. 59–63 ("this hopeless life of misery he endureth, for stealing from the immortals and giving to his fellows at a feast the nectar and ambrosia, whereby the gods had made him incorruptible"). The second legend—which is discarded by Pindar (*ibid.*, 52), "to me it is impossible to call one of the blessed gods cannibal"—is that Tantalus, when entertaining the gods, placed before them at the feast the limbs of his son Pelops, who (when restored to life by Zeus) was given an ivory shoulder in place of the one eaten unwittingly by Demeter. For other allusions to this story, and to Pindar's rejection of it, see *Lectures on Art*, § 151, and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 86. The third legend—of Tantalus telling τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς ἀπόρρητα—is mentioned by Diodorus Siculus (iv. 74) and Hyginus (82). The story of Tantalus stealing the dog is told by the scholiasts on Homer (*Odyssey*, xx. 66) and Pindar (*Ol.* i. 97). Zeus had a golden dog which guarded his sanctuary in Crete. Pandareos of Miletus stole it, but fearing to take it home with him, entrusted it to the keeping of Tantalus. Zeus sent Hermes to recover it, when Tantalus swore a great oath that he knew nothing about it. (For the subsequent punishment of Pandareos, see p. 318 *n.*) For a description of the punishment of Tantalus, see *Odyssey*, x. 581 *seq.*]

[2] [See § 11, p. 304.]

[3] [This story is mentioned in Smith's *Dictionary of Mythology*, on the authority of Antoninus Liberalis (11), a writer of the second century A.D.]

[4] [*Æneid*, vi. 126.]

Digitized by Google

the last labour of Hercules is the dragging him up to the light; and in some sort, he represents the voracity or devouring of Hades itself; and the mediæval representation of the mouth of hell perpetuates the same thought. Then, also, the power of evil passion is partly associated with the red and scorching light of Sirius, as opposed to the pure light of the sun:—he is the dog-star of ruin; and hence the continual Homeric dwelling upon him, and comparison of the flame of anger to his swarthy light;[1] only, in his scorching, it is thirst, not hunger, over which he rules physically; so that the fable of Icarius, his first master, corresponds, among the Greeks, to the legend of the drunkenness of Noah.[2]

The story of Actæon, the raging death of Hecuba, and the tradition of the white dog which ate part of Hercules' first sacrifice, and so gave name to the Cynosarges,[3] are all various phases of the same thought—the Greek notion of the dog being throughout confused between its serviceable fidelity, its watchfulness, its foul voracity, shamelessness, and deadly madness,[4] while with the curious reversal or recoil of the meaning which attaches itself to nearly every great myth—and which we shall presently see notably exemplified in the relations of the serpent to Athena,—the dog becomes in philosophy a type of severity and abstinence.

[1] [See, for instance, *Iliad*, xxii. 25 *seq.*]

[2] [For the legend of Icarius, who introduced Dionysus into Attica, see Apollodorus, iii. 14: he gave unmixed wine to the shepherds, who, thinking they had been drugged, killed Icarius and buried him. His daughter, Erigone, searched for him with the help of his dog, Mæra, and when she found the body, killed herself. Hyginus (130) adds that the dog Mæra became Canicula, the dog-star.]

[3] [For Cynosarges—a sanctuary and gymnasium outside the city walls of Athens—see the note in Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. ii. p. 193. The story, given in old dictionaries (see Frazer's references), is that one Diomus was sacrificing to Hercules when a white dog snatched up the victim and ran away with it. Thereupon Diomus was bidden by the oracle to find the place where the dog had deposited the victim, and there to build an altar to Hercules; hence the sanctuary was called Cynosarges (white dog). In later days the Cynics lectured at the place, and according to some interpreters derived their name from it.]

[4] [With the discussion here of the mythology of the dog should be compared *Eagle's Nest*, § 151, where Ruskin discusses "a succession of animal types used in art either to symbolise, or contrast with, dignity in human persons."]

Digitized by Google

24. It would carry us too far aside were I to tell you the story of Pandareos' dog—or rather, of Jupiter's dog, for Pandareos was its guardian only;[1] all that bears on our present purpose is that the guardian of this golden dog had three daughters, one of whom was subject to the power of the Sirens, and is turned into the nightingale; and the other two were subject to the power of the Harpies, and this was what happened to them.[2] They were very beautiful, and they were beloved by the gods in their youth, and all the great goddesses were anxious to bring them up rightly. Of all types of young ladies' education, there is nothing so splendid as that of the younger daughters of Pandareos. They have literally the four greatest goddesses for their governesses. Athena teaches them domestic accomplishments; how to weave, and sew, and the like; Artemis teaches them to hold themselves up straight; Hera, how to behave proudly and oppressively to company; and Aphrodite—delightful governess—feeds them with cakes and honey all day long. All goes well, until just the time when they are going to be brought out; then there is a great dispute whom they are to marry, and in the midst of it they are carried off by the Harpies, given by them to be slaves to the Furies, and never seen more. But of course there is nothing in Greek myths; and one never heard of such things as vain desires, and empty hopes, and clouded passions, defiling and snatching away the souls of maidens, in a London season.

I have no time to trace for you any more harpy legends, though they are full of the most curious interest;

[1] [See above, p. 316.]

[2] [The story is told by Homer (*Odyssey*, xx. 66–78) and by Pausanias (x. 30, 1, 2, in describing a picture of the subject by Polygnotus). Zeus, in punishment for the crime of Pandareos, had killed both him and his wife. It is a further illustration of what Ruskin has been saying about the dog that, according to one of the scholiasts, "Zeus inflicted on the maidens a disease, which is called 'dog'"—*i.e.*, perhaps, the form of insanity which consists in the patient believing himself to be an animal and behaving accordingly (see Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. v. pp. 381–383).]

Digitized by Google

but I may confirm for you my interpretation of this one, and prove its importance in the Greek mind, by noting that Polygnotus painted these maidens, in his great religious series of paintings at Delphi, crowned with flowers, and playing at dice;[1] and that Penelope remembers them in her last fit of despair, just before the return of Ulysses; and prays bitterly that she may be snatched away at once into nothingness by the Harpies, like Pandareos' daughters, rather than be tormented longer by her deferred hope, and anguish of disappointed love.[2]

25. I have hitherto spoken only of deities of the winds. We pass now to a far more important group, the Deities of Cloud. Both of these are subordinate to the ruling power of the air, as the demigods of the fountains and minor seas are to the great deep: but as the cloud-firmament detaches itself more from the air, and has a wider range of ministry than the minor streams and sea, the highest cloud deity, Hermes,[3] has a rank more equal with Athena than Nereus or Proteus with Neptune; and there is greater difficulty in tracing his character, because his physical dominion over the clouds can, of course, be asserted only where clouds are; and, therefore, scarcely at all in Egypt:* so that the changes which Hermes undergoes in becoming a Greek from an Egyptian and Phœnician god, are greater than in any other case of adopted tradition.

* I believe that the conclusions of recent scholarship are generally opposed to the Herodotean ideas of any direct acceptance by the Greeks of Egyptian Myths: and very certainly, Greek art is developed by giving the veracity and simplicity of real life to Eastern savage grotesque; and not by softening the severity of pure Egyptian designs. But it is of no consequence whether one conception was, or was not, in this case, derived from the other; my object is only to mark the essential differences between them.

---

[1] [See, again, Pausanias, x. 30, 2.]
[2] [See, again, *Odyssey*, xx. 66 *seq.*]
[3] [For other references to Hermes, as the cloud deity, see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 153, 156; *Aratra Pentelici*, § 160; and the "Tortoise of Ægina," § 20 (Vol. XX.).]

Digitized by Google

In Egypt Hermes is a deity of historical record,[1] and a conductor of the dead to judgment; the Greeks take away much of this historical function, assigning it to the Muses; but, in investing him with the physical power over clouds, they give him that which the Muses disdain—the power of concealment, and of theft. The snatching away by the Harpies is with brute force; but the snatching away by the clouds is connected with the thought of hiding, and of making things seem to be what they are not; so that Hermes is the god of lying, as he is of mist; and yet, with this ignoble function of making things vanish and disappear, is connected the remnant of his grand Egyptian authority of leading away souls in the cloud of death (the actual dimness of sight caused by mortal wounds physically suggesting the darkness and descent of clouds, and continually being so described in the *Iliad*);[2] while the sense of the need of guidance on the untrodden road follows necessarily. You cannot but remember how this thought of cloud guidance, and cloud receiving of souls at death, has been elsewhere ratified.[3]

26. Without following that higher clue, I will pass to the lovely group of myths connected with the birth of Hermes on the Greek mountains. You know that the valley of Sparta is one of the noblest mountain ravines in the world,[4] and that the western flank of it is formed by an unbroken chain of crags, forty miles long, rising, opposite

[1] [For Thoth, as the Egyptian Hermes, see *Ethics of the Dust* (Vol. XVIII. p. 364). "The principal office of this god was to record the final judgment of the dead in a future state, in the terrible hall of the two Truths" (Arundale's *Gallery of Antiquities*, p. 27).]

[2] [As, for instance, in xiii. 575 and xvi. 350 ("and the black cloud of death veiled him").]

[3] [Acts i. 9: "and a cloud received Him out of their sight."]

[4] [Ruskin, who had not been in Greece, is here writing from the descriptions of travellers—perhaps from Dodwell's: "All the plains and all the mountains that I have seen are surpassed in the variety of their combinations, and in the beauty of their appearance, by the plain of Lacedæmon and Mount Taygetus. . . . From the western side of the plain rise the grand and abrupt precipices of Taygetus, which is broken into many summits. The bases also of the mountain are formed by several projections distinct from each other, which branch into the plain, and hence produce the rich assemblage and luxuriant multiplicity of lines, and tints,

Digitized by Google

Sparta, to a height of 8,000 feet, and known as the chain of Taygetus. Now the nymph from whom that mountain ridge is named, was the mother of Lacedæmon; therefore, the mythic ancestress of the Spartan race. She is the nymph Taygeta, and one of the seven stars of spring; one of those Pleiades of whom is the question to Job,—"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"[1] "The sweet influences of Pleiades," of the stars of spring,—nowhere sweeter than among the pineclad slopes of the hills of Sparta and Arcadia, when the snows of their higher summits, beneath the sunshine of April, fell into fountains, and rose into clouds; and in every ravine was a newly-awakened voice of waters,—soft increase of whisper among its sacred stones: and on every crag its forming and fading veil of radiant cloud; temple above temple, of the divine marble that no tool can pollute, nor ruin undermine. And, therefore, beyond this central valley, this great Greek vase of Arcadia, on the "*hollow*" mountain, Cyllene,[2] or "pregnant" mountain, called also "cold," because there the vapours rest,* and born of the eldest of those stars of spring, that Maia, from whom your own month of May has its name, bringing to you, in the green of her garlands and

* On the altar of Hermes on its summit, as on that of the Lacinian Hera, no wind ever stirred the ashes. Beside those altars, the Gods of Heaven were appeased: and all their storms at rest.

---

and shades, which render it the finest locality in Greece" (*Tour through Greece*, vol. ii. pp. 408–410). For Taygete, the mother of Lacedæmon, see Pausanias, iii. 1, 2; she was changed after her death into one of the Pleiades (Hyginus, 155, 192; and see Virgil, *Georgics*, iv. 232).]

[1] [Job xxxviii. 31: compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 28. And for the Pleiades, see below, § 38, pp. 335–336.]

[2] [The name, no doubt, has to do with κοῖλος, hollow (though Pausanias gives a different derivation), and Ruskin goes on to suggest yet another, connecting the word κυλλήνη with κύω (to be pregnant). "Called cold" by Virgil (*Æneid*, viii. 139):—

"Vobis Mercurius pater est, quem candida Maia
Cyllenæ gelido conceptum vertice fudit."

The altar of Hermes on its summit is mentioned by Pausanias (viii. 17, 1); for the story of the wind never stirring the ashes, see the references given in Smith's *Dictionary of Mythology*; with which Ruskin compares the passage in Livy (xxiv. 3), of the altar of the Lacinian Hera, "fama est aram esse in vestibulo templi cujus cinerem nullo unquam moveri vento."]

Digitized by Google

the white of her hawthorn, the unrecognized symbols of the pastures and the wreathed snows of Arcadia, where long ago she was queen of stars: there—first cradled and wrapt in swaddling-clothes; then raised, in a moment of surprise, into his wandering power—is born the shepherd of the clouds,[1] winged-footed and deceiving,—blinding the eyes of Argus, —escaping from the grasp of Apollo—restless messenger between the highest[2] sky and topmost earth—

> "the herald Mercury,
> New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill."[3]

27. Now, it will be wholly impossible, at present, to trace for you any of the minor Greek expressions of this thought, except only that Mercury, as the cloud shepherd, is especially called Eriophoros, the wool-bearer.[4] You will recollect the name from the common woolly rush "eriophorum," which has a cloud of silky seed; and note also that he wears distinctively the flat cap, *petasos*, named from a word meaning to expand;[5] which shaded from the sun, and is worn on journeys. You have the epithet of mountains "cloud-capped" as an established form with every poet,[6] and the Mont Pilate of Lucerne is named from a Latin word signifying specially a *woollen* cap; but Mercury has, besides, a general Homeric epithet, curiously and intensely concentrated in meaning, "the profitable or serviceable by

[1] [See the opening lines of the Homeric Hymn: "Of Hermes sing, O Muse, the son of Zeus and Maia, Lord of Cyllene, and Arcadia rich in sheep," etc.]

[2] ["Highest" in eds. 1–3; altered to "lowest" in 1883, and so in subsequent editions; but in his own copy Ruskin cancelled the alteration (which was made by Mr. Faunthorpe).]

[3] [*Hamlet*, iii. 4, 58.]

[4] [This is a puzzling statement, for no instance can be found of the application of this rare epithet to Hermes. It is conceivable that when referring to his notebooks Ruskin (with the point he is here making in his mind) misread κριοφόρος as ἐριοφόρος. (If he had written the word in English letters, *criophoros* might easily have been misread *eriophoros*.) The former epithet ("ram-bearing") is applied to Hermes in Pausanias (ix. 22, 1), and the type is familiar in art as that from which the early Christian representations of the Good Shepherd were copied. Ruskin uses the phrase "Hermes Eriophoros" again in *Ariadne Florentina*, § 160.]

[5] [*i.e.*, πετάννυμι—connected with Hermes in Athenæus, 537 F.]

[6] [The German translator (see above, p. 286) here cites Schiller's *William Tell*, i.: "Der Mythenstein zieht seine Haube an." For the derivation of Mont Pilate from *pileatus*, see Vol. VII. p. 164 and *n.*]

Digitized by Google

wool,"* that is to say, by shepherd wealth; hence, "pecuniarily,"[1] rich, or serviceable, and so he passes at last into a general mercantile deity; while yet the cloud sense of the wool is retained by Homer always, so that he gives him this epithet when it would otherwise have been quite meaningless, (in *Iliad*, xxiv. 440,) when he drives Priam's chariot, and breathes force into his horses, precisely as we shall find Athena drive Diomed:[2] and yet the serviceable and profitable sense, and something also of gentle and soothing character in the mere wool-softness, as used for dress, and religious rites, is retained also in the epithet, and thus the gentle and serviceable Hermes is opposed to the deceitful one.

28. In connection with this driving of Priam's chariot, remember that as Autolycus[3] is the son of Hermes the Deceiver, Myrtilus (the Auriga of the Stars) is the son of Hermes the Guide. The name Hermes itself means Impulse;[4] and he is especially the shepherd of the flocks of the sky, in driving, or guiding, or stealing them; and yet his great name, Argeiphontes,[5] not only—as in different passages of the olden poets—means "Shining White," which is said

* I am convinced that the ἐρι in ἐριούνιος is not intensitive; but retained from ἔριον:[6] but even if I am wrong in thinking this, the mistake is of no consequence with respect to the general force of the term as meaning the *profitableness* of Hermes. Athena's epithet of ἀγελεία has a parallel significance.[7]

---

[1] [For the derivation of *pecunia* (wealth) from *pecus* (cattle), see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 53.]

[2] [See below, § 36, p. 332.]

[3] [See Vol. XVII. p. 39.]

[4] [So say some authorities, connecting the name with ὁρμή. But there are many other theories (see Preller-Robert, *Griechische Mythologie*, i. 336.]

[5] [The word occurs as epithet of Hermes some thirty times in Homer, but there is nothing to show from the context what it means. The first commentators took it to mean "Argus-Killer"—an interpretation which Aristarchus rejected because Homer did not appear to know the myth of Hermes slaying Argus by lulling his hundred eyes to sleep with the sound of his lyre. Hence, as an alternative, the interpretation "Shining White"; another suggestion is "Swift appearing" (see Leaf's note to *Iliad*, ii. 103).]

[6] [ἔριον = wool. The common explanation of the word (in ancient as in modern times) is ἐρι (intensitive) + ὀνίνημι, "the helper." But, says Mr. Leaf, "in view of the pastoral character of Hermes, a derivation from ἔριον, *making wool to grow*, is equally possible" (note on *Iliad*, xx. 34).]

[7] [*Iliad*, ii. 269; iv. 128, etc. Ruskin derives the epithet from ἀγέλη, making it mean "guardian of herds," and not "driver of spoil" (λείαν ἄγουσα).]

Digitized by Google

of him as being himself the silver cloud lighted by the sun; but "Argus-Killer," the killer of brightness, which is said of him as he veils the sky, and especially the stars, which are the eyes of Argus; or, literally, eyes of brightness, which Juno, who is, with Jupiter, part of the type of highest heaven, keeps in her peacock's train. We know that this interpretation is right, from a passage in which Euripides describes the shield of Hippomedon,[1] which bore for its sign, "Argus the all-seeing, covered with eyes; open towards the rising of the stars, and closed towards their setting."

And thus Hermes becomes the spirit of the movement of the sky or firmament; not merely the fast flying of the transitory cloud, but the great motion of the heavens and stars themselves. Thus, in his highest power, he corresponds to the "primo mobile" of the later Italian philosophy,[2] and, in his simplest, is the guide of all mysterious and cloudy movement, and of all successful subtleties. Perhaps the prettiest minor recognition of his character is when, on the night foray of Ulysses and Diomed, Ulysses wears the helmet stolen by Autolycus the son of Hermes.[3]

29. The position in the Greek mind of Hermes as the Lord of cloud is, however, more mystic and ideal than that of any other deity, just on account of the constant and real presence of the cloud itself under different forms, giving rise to all kinds of minor fables. The play of the Greek imagination in this direction is so wide and complex, that I cannot even give you an outline of its range in my present limits. There is first a great series of storm-legends connected with the family of the historic Æolus, centralized

[1] [*Phœnissæ*, 116.]

[2] [The *primum mobile* was in the Ptolemaic system of astronomy the tenth sphere, supposed to revolve from east to west in twenty-four hours, carrying with it all the other spheres. Thus in Milton (*Paradise Lost*, iii. 481–483):—

> "They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,
> And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
> The trepidation talked, and that *first moved*."

See the explanation of the passage in David Masson's edition of Milton, vol. ii. pp. 37 *seq.*]

[3] [*Iliad*, x. 261 *seq.*]

Digitized by Google

by the story of Athamas, with his two wives "the Cloud" and the "White Goddess,"[1] ending in that of Phrixus and Helle, and of the golden fleece (which is only the cloud-burden of Hermes Eriophoros[2]). With this, there is the fate of Salmoneus,* and the destruction of Glaucus by his own horses;[3] all these minor myths of storm concentrating themselves darkly into the legend of Bellerophon and the Chimæra, in which there is an under story about the vain subduing of passion and treachery, and the end of life in fading melancholy,[4]—which, I hope, not many of you could understand even were I to show it you: (the merely physical meaning of the Chimæra is the cloud of volcanic lightning, connected wholly with earth-fire, but resembling the heavenly cloud in its height and its thunder). Finally, in the Æolic group, there is the legend of Sisyphus, which I mean to work out thoroughly by itself: its root is in the position of Corinth as ruling the isthmus and the two seas

* Θραυσιμήδης Pind., *Pyth.*, 4, 254. Conf. Lucian in *Timon* [1883].[5]

[1] [Athamas, son of Æolus, married first Nephele; and then Ino, daughter of Cadmus, worshipped as a sea-goddess under the name Leucothea (*Odyssey*, v. 333). She was jealous of Phrixus and Helle, the children of Athamas by Nephele, and resolved to destroy them; but they escaped from her fury to Colchis, on a golden ram: for a passing reference to the legend, see *Crown of Wild Olive* (Vol. XVIII. p. 530), and compare *Lectures on Art*, § 152.]

[2] [See above, p. 322 *n.*]

[3] [The story of Glaucus, son of Sisyphus, destroyed by his own mares, is told by Hyginus (250), and referred to by Virgil (*Georgics*, ii. 267). For a passing reference to it, see *Art of England*, § 80.]

[4] [Here Ruskin rationalises the story of Bellerophon as told by the fabulists and poets. (For a passing reference to it, see *Lectures on Art*, § 151.) Bellerophon, after the murder of his brother, had fled to the court of Prœtus, King of Argos; and there he resisted the advances of Stenobœa, the king's wife. But she accused him to her husband, who sent him to his father-in-law, Jobates, King of Lycia, to be murdered treacherously. Jobates, not wishing to put him straight to death, imposed on Bellerophon many dangerous labours; amongst others, the slaying of the Chimæra. In vain did Bellerophon surmount them; for when he tried to escape to heaven on Pegasus, Zeus stung the horse and Bellerophon fell to earth, wandering about henceforth in deep dejection.]

[5] ["Rash Salmoneus," King of Elis, who wishing to be called a god, used to drive his chariot over a brazen bridge to imitate the thunder, and darted burning torches on either side, to imitate the lightning; for which impiety he was himself struck with a thunderbolt and placed in the infernal regions, near his brother Sisyphus—as Virgil relates (*Æneid*, vi. 585). His daring in thundering against Zeus is mentioned at the beginning of Lucian's *Timon*.]

Digitized by Google

—the Corinthian Acropolis, two thousand feet high, being the centre of the crossing currents of the winds, and of the commerce of Greece.[1] Therefore, Athena, and the fountain cloud Pegasus, are more closely connected with Corinth than even with Athens in their material, though not in their moral power; and Sisyphus founds the Isthmian games in connection with a melancholy story about the sea gods;[2] but he himself is κέρδιστος ἀνδρῶν, the most "gaining" and subtle of men:[3] who, having the key of the Isthmus, becomes the type of transit, transfer, or trade, as such; and of the apparent gain from it, which is not gain; and this is the real meaning of his punishment in hell—eternal toil and recoil (the modern idol of capital being, indeed, the stone of Sisyphus with a vengeance, *crushing* in its recoil). But, throughout, the old ideas of the cloud power and cloud feebleness,—the deceit of its hiding,—and the emptiness of its vanishing,—the Autolycus enchantment of making black seem white,—and the disappointed fury of Ixion (taking shadow for power),[4] mingle in the moral meaning of this and its collateral legends; and give an aspect, at last, not only of foolish cunning, but of impiety or literal "idolatry," "imagination worship," to the dreams of avarice and injustice, until this notion of atheism and insolent blindness becomes principal; and the *Clouds* of Aristophanes, with the personified "just" and "unjust" sayings in the latter part of the play, foreshadow, almost feature by feature, in all that they were written to mock and to chastise, the worst elements of the impious "δῖνος"[5] and

[1] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 50 (above, p. 100).]

[2] [Pausanias ii. 1, 3: "they say that the child Melicertes was landed on this spot by a dolphin, and that Sisyphus found him lying, buried him on the isthmus, and instituted the Isthmian games in his honour." Melicertes, son of Athamas and Ino, had been saved by his mother from the fury of his father. She in despair had thrown herself with her son in her arms into the sea; but Poseidon, pitying her, changed her into a sea-goddess, Leucothea: see above, p. 325.]

[3] [*Iliad*, vi. 153: compare "The Tortoise of Ægina," § 14 (Vol. XX.), where the legend of Sisyphus is further discussed.]

[4] [On this myth, compare *Unto this Last*, § 74 (Vol. XVII. p. 99).]

[5] [See *Clouds*, 380, where Socrates is represented as putting Δῖνος (whirling, rotation) in place of Δῖος (Zeus).]

Digitized by Google

tumult in men's thoughts, which have followed on their avarice in the present day, making them alike forsake the laws of their ancient gods, and misapprehend or reject the true words of their existing teachers.

30. All this we have from the legends of the historic Æolus only; but, besides these, there is the beautiful story of Semele, the mother of Bacchus.[1] She is the cloud with the strength of the vine in its bosom, consumed by the light which matures the fruit; the melting away of the cloud into the clear air at the fringe of its edges being exquisitely rendered by Pindar's epithet for her, Semele, "with the stretched-out hair" (τανύθειρα[2]). Then there is the entire tradition of the Danaïdes, and of the tower of Danaë and golden shower;[3] the birth of Perseus connecting this legend with that of the Gorgons and Graiæ, who are the true clouds of thunderous and ruinous tempest. I must, in passing, mark for you that the form of the sword or sickle of Perseus, with which he kills Medusa, is another image of the whirling harpy vortex, and belongs especially to the sword of destruction or annihilation; whence it is given to the two angels who gather for destruction the evil harvest and evil vintage of the earth (Rev. xiv. 15). I will collect afterwards and complete what I have already written respecting the Pegasean and Gorgonian legends,[4] noting here only what is necessary to explain the central myth of Athena herself, who represents the ambient air, which included all cloud, and rain, and dew, and darkness, and peace, and wrath of heaven. Let me now try to give you, however briefly, some distinct idea of the several agencies of this great goddess.

[1] [Here Ruskin explains as a nature-myth the story of Semele, who was visited by Zeus attended with clouds, lightning, and thunderbolt, and, unable to endure so much majesty, was consumed by fire. Compare *Catalogue of the Reference Series*, No. 183.]

[2] [*Olymp.*, ii. 46.]

[3] [Discussed in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 185).]

[4] [One of several unfulfilled intentions in the department of Greek mythology: see above, Introduction, p. lxvi. The Pegasean and Gorgonian legends had already been discussed in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 181 *seq.*).]

Digitized by Google

31. I. She is the air giving life and health to all animals.

II. She is the air giving vegetative power to the earth.

III. She is the air giving motion to the sea, and rendering navigation possible.

IV. She is the air nourishing artificial light, torch or lamplight; as opposed to that of the sun, on one hand, and of *consuming* * fire on the other.

V. She is the air conveying vibration of sound.

I will give you instances of her agency in all these functions.

32. First, and chiefly, she is air as the spirit of life, giving vitality to the blood. Her psychic relation to the vital force in matter lies deeper, and we will examine it afterwards;[1] but a great number of the most interesting passages in Homer regard her as flying over the earth in local and transitory strength, simply and merely the goddess of fresh air.[2]

It is curious that the British city which has somewhat saucily styled itself the Modern Athens,[3] is indeed more under her especial tutelage and favour in this respect than perhaps any other town in the island. Athena is first simply what in the Modern Athens you so practically find her, the breeze of the mountain and the sea; and wherever she comes, there is purification, and health, and power. The sea-beach round this isle of ours is the frieze of our Parthenon, every wave that breaks on it thunders with Athena's voice; nay, whenever you throw your window wide open in the morning, you let in Athena, as wisdom and fresh air at the same instant; and whenever you draw a pure, long, full breath of right heaven, you take Athena

* Not a scientific, but a very practical and expressive distinction.

[1] [Below, §§ 51 *seq.*, pp. 351 *seq.*]
[2] [Ruskin gives instances below, p. 330.]
[3] [Compare *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 42 (Vol. XII. p. 65).]

Digitized by Google

into your heart, through your blood; and with the blood, into the thoughts of your brain.[1]

Now this giving of strength by the air, observe, is mechanical as well as chemical. You cannot strike a good blow but with your chest full; and in hand to hand fighting, it is not the muscle that fails first, it is the breath; the longest-breathed will, on the average, be the victor,—not the strongest. Note how Shakspeare always leans on this. Of Mortimer, in "changing hardiment with great Glendower":[2]—

> "Three times they breathed, and three times did they drink,
> Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood."

And again, Hotspur sending challenge to Prince Harry:—

> "That none might draw short breath to-day
> But I and Harry Monmouth."

Again, of Hamlet, before he receives his wound:—

> "He's fat, and scant of breath."

Again, Orlando in the wrestling:—

> "Yes, I beseech your grace: I am not yet well breathed."

Now of all people that ever lived, the Greeks knew best what breath meant, both in exercise and in battle; and therefore the queen of the air becomes to them at once the queen of bodily strength in war; not mere brutal muscular strength,—that belongs to Ares,—but the strength of young lives passed in pure air and swift exercise,—Camilla's virginal force, that "flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main."[3]

[1] [This passage is quoted by Tyndall in his *Hours of Exercise in the Alps*, p. 302 (ed. 1899).]

[2] [The passages referred to are in *1 Henry IV.*, i. 3, and v. 2 ("And that no man," etc.: Ruskin quotes from memory); *Hamlet*, v. 2; *As You Like It*, i. 2.]

[3] [*Æneid*, vii. 808. Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, Preface 1882 (Vol. XVIII. p. 50); and for other references to Camilla, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 255); *Academy Notes*, 1875 (Vol. XIV. p. 308); *Art of England*, § 80; and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 66.]

Digitized by Google

33. Now I will rapidly give you two or three instances of her direct agency in this function. First, when she wants to make Penelope bright and beautiful; and to do away with the signs of her waiting and her grief. "Then Athena thought of another thing; she laid her into deep sleep, and loosed all her limbs, and made her taller, and made her smoother, and fatter, and whiter than sawn ivory; and breathed ambrosial brightness over her face; and so she left her and went up to heaven."[1] Fresh air and sound sleep at night, young ladies! You see you may have Athena for lady's maid whenever you choose. Next, hark how she gives strength to Achilles when he is broken with fasting and grief. Jupiter pities him and says to her, —"'Daughter mine, are you forsaking your own soldier, and don't you care for Achilles any more? see how hungry and weak he is,—go and feed him with ambrosia.' So he urged the eager Athena; and she leapt down out of heaven like a harpy falcon, shrill voiced; and she poured nectar and ambrosia, full of delight, into the breast of Achilles, that his limbs might not fail with famine: then she returned to the solid dome of her strong father."[2] And then comes the great passage about Achilles arming—for which we have no time. But here is again Athena giving strength to the whole Greek army. She came as a falcon to Achilles, straight at him;—a sudden drift of breeze; but to the army she must come widely,—she sweeps round them all. "As when Jupiter spreads the purple rainbow over heaven, portending battle or cold storm, so Athena, wrapping herself round with a purple cloud, stooped to the Greek soldiers, and raised up each of them."[3] Note that purple, in Homer's use of it, nearly always means "fiery," "full of light."[4] It is the light of the rainbow, not the colour of it, which Homer means you to think of.

[1] [*Odyssey*, xviii. 187–197 (freely rendered: see above, p. 308 *n.*).]
[2] [*Iliad*, xix. 342–351.]
[3] [*Ibid.*, xvii. 547–552.]
[4] [See above, § 20 *n.*, p. 313; and compare § 91, p. 379.]

Digitized by Google

34. But the most curious passage of all, and fullest of meaning, is when she gives strength to Menelaus, that he may stand unwearied against Hector. He prays to her: "And blue-eyed Athena was glad that he prayed to her, first; and she gave him strength in his shoulders, and in his limbs, and she gave him the courage"—of what animal, do you suppose? Had it been Neptune or Mars, they would have given him the courage of a bull, or lion; but Athena gives him the courage of the most fearless in attack of all creatures—small or great—and very small it is, but wholly incapable of terror,—she gives him the courage of a fly.[1]

35. Now this simile of Homer's is one of the best instances I can give you of the way in which great writers seize truths unconsciously which are for all time. It is only recent science which has completely shown the perfectness of this minute symbol of the power of Athena; proving that the insect's flight and breath are co-ordinated; that its wings are actually forcing pumps, of which the stroke compels the thoracic respiration; and that it thus breathes and flies simultaneously by the action of the same muscles, so that respiration is carried on most vigorously during flight, "while the air-vessels, supplied by many pairs of lungs instead of one, traverse the organs of flight in far greater numbers than the capillary blood-vessels of our own system, and give enormous and untiring muscular power, a rapidity of action measured by thousands of strokes in the minute, and an endurance, by miles and hours of flight." *

Homer could not have known this; neither that the buzzing of the fly was produced as in a wind instrument, by a constant current of air through the trachea. But

* Ormerod. *Natural History of Wasps.*[2]

---

[1] [*Iliad*, xvii. 566–570: *καὶ οἱ μυίης θάρσος ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἐτίθει.*]

[2] [Most of the phrases occur, but the passage is not an exact quotation; it and the preceding sentences being put together from E. A. Ormerod's *British Social Wasps: an Introduction to their . . . General Natural History*, pp. 99–124.]

Digitized by Google

he had seen, and, doubtless, meant us to remember, the marvellous strength and swiftness of the insect's flight (the glance of the swallow itself is clumsy and slow compared to the darting of common house-flies at play); he probably attributed its murmur to the wings, but in this also there was a type of what we shall presently find recognized in the name of Pallas,—the vibratory power of the air to convey sound,—while, as a purifying creature, the fly holds its place beside the old symbol of Athena in Egypt, the vulture; and as a venomous and tormenting creature, has more than the strength of the serpent in proportion to its size, being thus entirely representative of the influence of the air both in purification and pestilence; and its courage is so notable that, strangely enough, forgetting Homer's simile, I happened to take the fly for an expression of the audacity of freedom in speaking of quite another subject.* Whether it should be called courage, or mere mechanical instinct, may be questioned, but assuredly no other animal, exposed to continual danger, is so absolutely without sign of fear.

86. You will, perhaps, have still patience to hear two instances, not of the communication of strength, but of the personal agency of Athena as the air. When she comes down to help Diomed against Ares, she does not come to fight instead of him, but she takes his charioteer's place.

> "She snatched the reins, she lashed with all her force,
> And full on Mars impelled the foaming horse."[1]

Ares is the first to cast his spear; then, note this:—Pope says—

> "Pallas opposed her hand, and caused to glance,
> Far from the car, the strong immortal lance."[2]

* See farther on, § 148.[3]

---

[1] [*Iliad*, v. 840, 841; 1034, 1035 in Pope's version. Compare § 27, above (p. 323), and *Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. p. 365.]

[2] [*Ibid.*, 1046, 1047 in Pope's version.]

[3] [This is a passage which was reprinted in *Queen of the Air* from *The Cestus of Aglaia*: see now p. 123, above.]

Digitized by Google

She does not *oppose* her hand in the Greek, for the wind could not meet the lance straight. She catches it in her hand, and throws it off. There is no instance in which a lance is so parried by a mortal hand in all the *Iliad;* and it is exactly the way the wind would parry it, catching it and turning it aside. If there be any good rifleshots here, they know something about Athena's parrying—and in old times the English masters of feathered artillery knew more yet. Compare also the turning of Hector's lance from Achilles: *Iliad*, xx. 439.

87. The last instance I will give you is as lovely as it is subtle. Throughout the *Iliad* Athena is herself the will or Menis of Achilles. If he is to be calmed, it is she who calms him; if angered, it is she who inflames him. In the first quarrel with Atrides, when he stands at pause, with the great sword half drawn, "Athena came from heaven, and stood behind him, and caught him by the yellow hair."[1] Another god would have stayed his hand upon the hilt, but Athena only lifts his hair. "And he turned and knew her, and her dreadful eyes shone upon him."[2] There is an exquisite tenderness in this laying her hand upon his hair, for it is the talisman of his life, vowed to his own Thessalian river if he ever returned to its shore, and cast upon Patroclus' pile, so ordaining that there should be no return.[3]

88. Secondly—Athena is the air giving vegetative impulse to the earth. She is the wind and the rain—and yet more the pure air itself, getting at the earth fresh turned by spade or plough—and, above all, feeding the fresh

[1] [*Iliad*, i. 194–197. Here, again, compare *Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. p. 365.]

[2] [*Ibid.*, 199, 200.]

[3] [*Ibid.*, xxiii. 140 *seq.* (thus rendered by Pope):—

"But great Achilles stands apart in prayer,
And from his head divides the yellow hair;
Those curling locks which from his youth he vowed,
And sacred grew, to Sperchius' honoured flood:
Then sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,
And rolled his eyes around the watery waste."

For an interpretation of the dedication of the hair as a nature-myth, see above, § 12, p. 305.]

Digitized by Google

leaves; for though the Greeks knew nothing about carbonic acid, they did know that trees fed on the air.

Now, note first in this, the myth of the air getting at ploughed ground. You know I told you the Lord of all labour by which man lived was Hephæstus;[1] therefore Athena adopts a child of his, and of the earth,—Erichthonius,—literally, "the tearer up of the ground"—who is the head (though not in direct line) of the kings of Attica; and having adopted him, she gives him to be brought up by the three nymphs of the dew. Of these, Aglauros, the dweller in the fields, is the envy or malice of the earth; she answers nearly to the envy of Cain, the tiller of the ground, against his shepherd brother, in her own envy against her two sisters, Herse, the cloud dew, who is the beloved of the shepherd Mercury; and Pandrosos, the diffused dew, or dew of heaven. Literally, you have in this myth the words of the blessing of Esau—"Thy dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above."[2] Aglauros is for her envy turned into a black stone; and hers is one of the voices,—the other being that of Cain,—which haunts the circle of envy in the Purgatory:—

"Io sono Aglauro, chi divenne sasso."[3]

But to her two sisters, with Erichthonius, (or the hero Erectheus,) is built the most sacred temple of Athena in Athens; the temple to their own dearest Athena—to her, and to the dew together: so that it was divided into two parts: one, the temple of Athena of the city, and the other that of the dew.[4] And this expression of her power, as the air bringing the dew to the hill pastures, in the central temple of the central city of the heathen, dominant

[1] [See above, § 13 (p. 305).]
[2] [Genesis xxvii. 39.]
[3] [*Purgatorio*, xiv. 139. Compare Ruskin's Preface, § 19, to *The Economist of Xenophon*.]
[4] [The Erechtheum seems to have included three distinct shrines—the Temple of Athena Polias, the most revered sanctuary of Athens (compare § 15, above, p. 306); the shrines of Erechtheus and Poseidon; and, thirdly, the Pandroseion.]

Digitized by Google

over the future intellectual world, is, of all the facts connected with her worship as the spirit of life, perhaps the most important. I have no time now to trace for you the hundredth part of the different ways in which it bears both upon natural beauty, and on the best order and happiness of men's lives. I hope to follow out some of these trains of thought in gathering together what I have to say about field herbage; but I must say briefly here that the great sign, to the Greeks, of the coming of spring in the pastures, was not, as with us, in the primrose, but in the various flowers of the asphodel tribe (of which I will give you some separate account presently[1]); therefore it is that the earth answers with crocus flame to the cloud on Ida;[2] and the power of Athena in eternal life is written by the light of the asphodel on the Elysian fields.

But farther, Athena is the air, not only to the lilies of the field, but to the leaves of the forest. We saw before[3] the reason why Hermes is said to be the son of Maia, the eldest of the sister stars of spring. Those stars are called not only Pleiades, but Vergiliæ, from a word mingling the ideas of the turning or returning of spring-time with the out-pouring of rain.[4] The mother of Virgil bearing the name

[1] [Below, §§ 82, 83, pp. 373, 374.]

[2] [See *Iliad*, xiv. 347 *seq.*, where in the recesses of Mount Ida, "beneath them the divine earth caused fresh grass to spring up, and dewy lotus and crocus . . . and they were clothed with a cloud, beauteous, golden." The passage is imitated by Tennyson in his description of "a vale in Ida" (*Œnone*, 97):—

"It was the deep mid-noon: one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like flame."]

[3] [Above § 26, p. 321.]

[4] [Ruskin is here thinking of a passage in Max Müller: "It was the sailor who, before entrusting his life and goods to the winds and the waves of the ocean, watched for the rising of those stars which he called the Sailing-stars or *Pleiades*, from *plein*, to sail. Navigation in the Greek waters was considered safe after the return of the Pleiades; and it closed when they disappeared. The Latin name for the *Pleiades* is *Vergiliæ*, from *virga*, a sprout or twig. This name was given to them by the Italian husbandmen, because in Italy, where they became visible about May, they marked the return of summer" (*Lectures on the Science of Language*, vol. i. p. 8). Ruskin was fond of finding, or forcing, the significance of names, but he seems here to forget that Vergilius was the name, not of an individual, but of the poet's *gens*.]

Digitized by Google

of Maia, Virgil himself received his name from the seven stars; and he, in forming, first, the mind of Dante, and through him that of Chaucer (besides whatever special minor influence came from the *Pastorals* and *Georgics*), became the fountain-head of all the best literary power connected with the love of vegetative nature among civilized races of men. Take the fact for what it is worth; still it is a strange seal of coincidence, in word and in reality, upon the Greek dream of the power over human life, and its purest thoughts, in the stars of spring. But the first syllable of the name of Virgil has relation also to another group of words, of which the English ones, virtue, and virgin, bring down the force to modern days.[1] It is a group containing mainly the idea of "spring," or increase of life in vegetation—the rising of the new branch of the tree out of the bud, and of the new leaf out of the ground. It involves, secondarily, the idea of greenness and of strength, but primarily, that of living increase of a new rod from a stock, stem, or root; ("There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse;"[2]) and chiefly the stem of certain plants—either of the rose tribe, as in the budding of the almond rod of Aaron; or of the olive tribe, which has triple significance in this symbolism, from the use of its oil for sacred anointing, for strength in the gymnasium, and for light. Hence, in numberless divided and reflected ways, it is connected with the power of Hercules and Athena: Hercules plants the wild olive, for its shade, on the course of Olympia, and it thenceforward gives the Olympic crown, of consummate honour and rest;[3] while the prize at the Panathenaic games is a vase of its oil, (meaning encouragement to continuance of effort); and from the paintings on these Panathenaic vases we get the most precious clue to the entire character of Athena. Then to express its propagation by slips, the trees from

[1] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, §§ 71, 80 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 288, 301).]
[2] [Isaiah xi. 1.]
[3] [See Pausanias, v. 7, 4.]

Digitized by Google

which the oil was to be taken were called "Moriai,"[1] trees of division (being all descendants of the sacred one in the Erechtheum). And thus, in one direction, we get to the "children like olive plants round about thy table" and the olive grafting of St. Paul;[2] while the use of the oil for anointing gives chief name to the rod itself of the stem of Jesse, and to all those who were by that name signed for his disciples first in Antioch. Remember, farther, since that name was first given, the influence of the symbol, both in extreme unction, and in consecration of priests and kings to their "divine right"; and think, if you can reach with any grasp of thought, what the influence on the earth has been, of those twisted branches whose leaves give grey bloom to the hillsides under every breeze that blows from the midland sea. But, above and beyond all, think how strange it is that the chief Agonia of humanity, and the chief giving of strength from heaven for its fulfilment, should have been under its night shadow in Palestine.[3]

89. Thirdly—Athena is the air in its power over the sea.

On the earliest Panathenaic vase known—the "Burgon" vase in the British Museum[4]—Athena has a dolphin on her shield. The dolphin has two principal meanings in Greek symbolism. It means, first, the sea; secondarily, the ascending and descending course of any of the heavenly

[1] ["The word seems to me to contain an allusion to their supposed origin: it is an historical expression of this very propagation or *partition* of these olives from the one stock in the Erechtheum. *μοριὰ ἐλαία* is olea *partitiva*. The word itself (from *μείρω*, *μόρος*, etc.) still survives in its compound *συμμορία*, a *class*. All the Athenian olives were thus conceived to be the offspring of one sacred parent: they were the offspring of the Will of Minerva; the sanctity of the parent served to protect its offspring" (Chr. Wordsworth's *Athens and Attica*, 1836, p. 136 and *n.*).]

[2] [Psalms cxxviii. 3; Romans xi. 17. Christ, the anointed; and "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts xi. 26).]

[3] [See Matthew xxvi. 30, 36. The traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane is at the foot of Mount Olivet, where eight aged olive-trees "have always struck even the most indifferent observers" (see Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, ch. xiv.).]

[4] [Called the "Burgon Vase" because found (in 1813, on the site of an ancient cemetery outside the city walls of Athens) in the presence of Thomas Burgon (for whom see Vol. IX. p. 466 *n.*), as described in *Transactions Royal Society of Literature*, vol. ii. pt. i. p. 107 (for a summary, see E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the . . . British Museum*, p. 330). The vase is numbered B. 130.]

Digitized by Google

bodies from one sea horizon to another—the dolphin's arching rise and re-plunge (in a summer evening, out of calm sea, their black backs roll round with exactly the slow motion of a water-wheel; but I do not know how far Aristotle's exaggerated account of their leaping or their swiftness has any foundation,[1]) being taken as a type of the emergence of the sun or stars from the sea in the east and plunging beneath in the west. Hence, Apollo, when in his personal power he crosses the sea, leading his Cretan colonists to Pytho, takes the form of a dolphin, becomes Apollo Delphinius, and names the founded colony "Delphi."* The lovely drawing of the Delphic Apollo on the hydria of the Vatican (Lenormant and De Witte, vol. ii. pl. 6[2]), gives the entire conception of this myth. Again, the beautiful coins of Tarentum represent Taras coming to found the city, riding on a dolphin,[3] whose leaps and plunges have partly the rage of the sea in them, and partly the spring of the horse, because the splendid riding of the Tarentines had made their name proverbial in Magna Græcia. The story of Arion[4] is a collateral fragment of the same thought; and again, the plunge before their transformation, of the ships of Æneas.[5] Then, this idea of

* See Notes on Pindar, *Pyth.*, iv.[6]

---

[1] [*Hist. An.*, ix. 48, 4, where it is said that the dolphin leaps over the masts of ships, and darts as quick as an arrow. For another reference to the Greek type of dolphin, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 276). See also Vol. II. p. 114 *n.*]

[2] [*Élite des Monuments Céramographiques . . . expliqués et commentés par Ch. Lenormant et J. de Witte*, 4 vols., 1837, etc. The plate is at p. 20; and is here reproduced (Plate XV.). The design is further discussed in *Lectures on Art*, § 52 (Vol. XX.), and Ruskin placed the plate (cut from his copy of Lenormant) in the Reference Series, No. 207.]

[3] [On these coins of Tarentum, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 18 (above, p. 69), and for the legend of Taras, see "The Riders of Tarentum" in Vol. XX.]

[4] [See Ruskin's early poem on the subject (1842): Vol. II. p. 114.]

[5] [*Æneid*, ix. 119.]

[6] [This note was added by the reviser in 1883. The true reference is, however, to the Homeric Hymn to Apollo: "And whereas I first, in the misty sea, sprang aboard the swift ship in the guise of a dolphin, therefore pray to me as Apollo Delphinius, while mine shall ever be the Delphian altar seen from afar" (*The Homeric Hymns: a New Prose Translation*, by Andrew Lang, 1899, p. 130).]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Delphic Apollo

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

career upon, or conquest of the sea, either by the creatures themselves, or by dolphin-like ships, (compare the Merlin prophecy,—

> "They shall ride
> Over ocean wide
> With hempen bridle, and horse of tree,"[1])

connects itself with the thought of undulation, and of the wave-power in the sea itself, which is always expressed by the serpentine bodies either of the sea-gods or of the sea-horse; and when Athena carries, as she does often in later work, a serpent for her shield-sign, it is not so much the repetition of her own ægis-snakes as the farther expression of her power over the sea-wave; which, finally, Virgil gives in its perfect unity with her own anger, in the approach of the serpents against Laocoon from the sea:[2] and then, finally, when her own storm-power is fully put forth on the ocean also, and the madness of the ægis-snake is given to the wave-snake, the sea-wave becomes the devouring hound at the waist of Scylla,[3] and Athena takes Scylla for her helmet-crest; while yet her beneficent and essential power on the ocean, in making navigation possible, is commemorated in the Panathenaic festival by her peplus being carried to the Erechtheum suspended from the mast of a ship.[4]

[1] [Thomas of Ercildoune. Quoted also in *The Harbours of England*, Vol. XIII. p. 49.]

[*Æneid*, ii. 205.]

[3] [The dogs at the waist of Scylla may be seen in a Pompeian wall-painting figured in Plate 53 (c) of Miss Jane Harrison's *Myths of the Odyssey*: "there is something of the sea-horse about them; they may have been intended as a sort of indication of the cruel sea waves" (p. 190). For reference to another aspect of the dogs, see *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 58 (above, p. 107). Scylla, as Athena's head-crest, may be seen on a magnificent coin of Thurium in the British Museum (III. C. 17, and Plate 25 in the *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*, 1889): the reverse of the same coin is figured and described in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 203. See also Ruskin's instance of the type at the end of the present §.]

[4] [The robe of Athena is supposed to have been fixed to the mast of a ship with wheels (see Meineke's *Frag. Com.*, ii. 772). The only existing copy of the ship may be seen in the frieze of the small metropolitan church in Athens. The two designs are here reproduced (Plate XVI.). Ruskin discusses them again in *Lectures on Art*, § 153; and he placed the plate from Lenormant in the Reference Series, No. 186 (Vol. XX.).]

Digitized by Google

In Plate cxv. of vol. ii., Lenormant,[1] are given two sides of a vase, which, in rude and childish way, assembles most of the principal thoughts regarding Athena in this relation. In the first the sunrise is represented by the ascending chariot of Apollo, foreshortened; the light is supposed to blind the eyes, and no face of the god is seen. (Turner, in the Ulysses and Polyphemus sunrise, loses the form of the god in light, giving the chariot-horses only;[2] rendering in his own manner, after 2,200 years of various fall and revival of the arts, precisely the same thought as the old Greek potter.) He ascends out of the sea; but the sea itself has not yet caught the light. In the second design, Athena as the morning breeze, and Hermes as the morning cloud, fly over the sea before the sun. Hermes turns back his head; his face is unseen in the cloud, as Apollo's in the light; the grotesque appearance of an animal's face is only the cloud-phantasm modifying a frequent form of the hair of Hermes beneath the back of his cap. Under the morning breeze, the dolphins leap from the rippled sea, and their sides catch the light.

The coins of the Lucanian Heracleia give a fair representation of the helmed Athena, as imagined in later Greek art, with the embossed Scylla.[3]

40. Fourthly—Athena is the air nourishing artificial light—unconsuming fire. Therefore, a lamp was always kept burning in the Erechtheum; and the torch-race belongs chiefly to her festival,[4] of which the meaning is to show the danger of the perishing of the light even by excess

[1] [At p. 386; from a small Bacchic amphora, black-figured, in the Cabinet de Médailles at the Louvre.]

[2] [For this picture (No. 508 in the National Gallery), see Vol. XIII. p. 136.]

[3] [See IV. C. 16 and Plate 34 in the British Museum *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*, 1889. The type is seen also in the Athena of Thurium (on Plate XX. of Vol. XX.).]

[4] ["Callimachus made a golden lamp for the goddess. They fill the lamp with oil, and wait till the same day next year, and the oil suffices for the lamp during all the intervening time, though it is burning night and day" (Pausanias, i. 26, 7: see also Strabo, ix. p. 396, and Plutarch's *Lives of Numa*, 3, and of *Sulla*, 13). For another interpretation of the ritual of the perpetual fire or lamp (which was by no means confined to the cult of Athena), see Frazer's *Pausanias*, vol. iv. p. 441. A

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Chariot of Apollo

Athena as the Morning Breeze; and Hermes as the Morning Cloud

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

of the air that nourishes it: and so that the race is not to the swift,[1] but to the wise. The household use of her constant light is symbolized in the lovely passage in the *Odyssey*, where Ulysses and his son move the armour while the servants are shut in their chambers, and there is no one to hold torches for them; but Athena herself, "having a golden lamp,"[2] fills all the rooms with light. Her presence in war-strength with her favourite heroes is always shown by the "unwearied"[3] fire hovering on their helmets and shields; and the image gradually becomes constant and accepted, both for the maintenance of household watchfulness, as in the parable of the ten virgins, or as the symbol of direct inspiration, in the rushing wind and divided flames of Pentecost:[4] but, together with this thought of unconsuming and constant fire, there is always mingled in the Greek mind the sense of the consuming by excess, as of the flame by the air, so also of the inspired creature by its own fire (thus, again, "the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up"—"my zeal hath consumed me, because of thine enemies,"[5] and the like); and especially Athena has this aspect towards the truly sensual and bodily strength; so that to Ares, who is himself insane and consuming, the opposite wisdom seems to be insane and consuming: "All we the other gods have thee against us, O Jove! when we would give grace to men; for thou hast begotten the maid without a mind—the mischievous creature, the doer of unseemly evil. All we obey thee, and are ruled by thee. Her only thou wilt not resist in anything she says

torch-race in the Ceramicus was one of the events of the Panathenaic Festival; similar races were held at other festivals (for their ritual significance, see *ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 392): in the British Museum, there is a relief (No. 814), illustrating the well-known passage at the beginning of Plato's *Republic* (see E. T. Cook's *Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities in the British Museum*, p. 247).]

[1] [Ecclesiastes ix. 11.]

[2] [*Odyssey*, xix. 34.]

[3] [*Iliad*, v. 4 (where Athena gives strength to Diomede): *δαΐζ' οἱ ἐκ κόρυθός τε καὶ ἀσπίδος ἀκάματον πῦρ.*]

[4] [Matthew xxv.; Acts ii. 2, 3.]

[5] [Psalms lxix. 9; cxix. 139.]

Digitized by Google

or does, because thou didst bear her—consuming child as she is."[1]

41. Lastly—Athena is the air conveying vibration of sound.

In all the loveliest representations in central Greek art of the birth of Athena, Apollo stands close to the sitting Jupiter, singing, with a deep, quiet joyfulness, to his lyre.[2] The sun is always thought of as the master of time and rhythm, and as the origin of the composing and inventive discovery of melody; but the air, as the actual element and substance of the voice, the prolonging and sustaining power of it, and the symbol of its moral passion. Whatever in music is measured and designed, belongs therefore to Apollo and the Muses; whatever is impulsive and passionate, to Athena: hence her constant strength of voice or cry (as when she aids the shout of Achilles[3]) curiously opposed to the dumbness of Demeter.[4] The Apolline lyre, therefore, is not so much the instrument producing sound, as its measurer and divider by length or tension of string into given notes; and I believe it is, in a double connection with its office as a measurer of time or motion, and its relation to the transit of the sun in the sky, that Hermes forms it from the tortoise-shell,[5] which is the image of the dappled concave of the cloudy sky. Thenceforward all the limiting or restraining modes of music belong to the Muses; but the passionate music is wind music, as in the Doric

[1] [*Iliad*, v. 872–880.]

[2] [The position may be seen in the early Greek vase of "The Nativity of Athena," in *Aratra Pentelici*, § 74.]

[3] [*Iliad*, xviii. 217–218; compare *Ethics of the Dust*, Vol. XVIII. p. 364 *n.*]

[4] [Who, however, had reason for her silence in absorbing grief for her daughter. "In silence she waited, casting down her lovely eyes. . . . Then sat she down and held the veil before her face; long in sorrow and silence sat she so, and spake to no man nor made any sign, but smileless she sat, nor tasted meat nor drink, wasting with long desire for her deep-bosomed daughter" (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter:* Lang's translation).]

[5] [In the British Museum there is a bronze disk (No. 856) with a relief representing Hermes making the lyre; thus illustrating the passage in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, where the poet describes how the god found a tortoise and recognized the soul of music in its shell (see Andrew Lang's translation of *The Homeric Hymns*, p. 136).]

Digitized by Google

flute. Then, when this inspired music becomes degraded in its passion, it sinks into the pipe of Pan, and the double pipe of Marsyas, and is then rejected by Athena.[1] The myth which represents her doing so is that she invented the double pipe from hearing the hiss of the Gorgonian serpents; but when she played upon it, chancing to see her face reflected in water, she saw that it was distorted, whereupon she threw down the flute, which Marsyas found. Then, the strife of Apollo and Marsyas represents the enduring contest between music in which the words and thought lead, and the lyre measures or melodizes them, (which Pindar means when he calls his hymns "kings over the lyre,"[2]) and music in which the words are lost, and the wind or impulse leads,—generally, therefore, between intellectual, and brutal, or meaningless, music.[3] Therefore, when Apollo prevails, he flays Marsyas, taking the limit and external bond of his shape from him, which is death, without touching the mere muscular strength; yet shameful and dreadful in dissolution.

42. And the opposition of these two kinds of sound is continually dwelt upon by the Greek philosophers, the real fact at the root of all their teaching being this,—that true music[4] is the natural expression of a lofty passion for a right cause; that in proportion to the kingliness and force of any personality, the expression either of its joy or suffering

[1] [In a letter to Professor Norton already mentioned (above, p. 311 *n.*) Ruskin says: "I found out the Piping and Fluting from the Pindaric ode which describes Athena making the Pan's pipe out of Medusa's hair." The reference is to the Twelfth Pythian Ode, but the suggestion that Athena made the pipe out of Medusa's hair is Ruskin's own. Pindar says: "But the Maiden, when that she had delivered her well-beloved from these toils, contrived the manifold music of the flute, that with such instrument she might repeat the shrill lament that reached her from Euryale's ravening jaws" (Myers).]

[2] [ἀναξιφόρμιγγες ὕμνοι (*Olymp.*, ii. 1): compare "The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts," § 19 (above, p. 177).]

[3] [With this passage should be compared *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 82 and 83, and the communication printed in the latter from Dr. A. S. Murray, suggesting another interpretation of the myth of Marsyas. Ruskin also adds in that place some notes on other myths about music.]

[4] [The passage from "true music is the natural expression . . ." down to ". . . subtlest aid of moral degradation" was here incorporated from Ruskin's Rede Lecture, § 18: see above, p. 176.]

Digitized by Google

becomes measured, chastened, calm, and capable of interpretation only by the majesty of ordered, beautiful, and worded sound. Exactly in proportion to the degree in which we become narrow in the cause and conception of our passions, incontinent in the utterance of them, feeble of perseverance in them, sullied or shameful in the indulgence of them, their expression by musical sound becomes broken, mean, fatuitous, and at last impossible; the measured waves of the air of heaven will not lend themselves to expression of ultimate vice, it must be for ever sunk into discordance or silence. And since, as before stated, every work of right art has a tendency to reproduce the ethical state which first developed it, this, which of all the arts is most directly ethical in origin, is also the most direct in power of discipline; the first, the simplest, the most effective of all instruments of moral instruction;[1] while in the failure and betrayal of its functions, it becomes the subtlest aid of moral degradation. Music is thus, in her health, the teacher of perfect order, and is the voice of the obedience of angels, and the companion of the course of the spheres of heaven; and in her depravity she is also the teacher of perfect disorder and disobedience, and the Gloria in Excelsis becomes the Marseillaise. In the third section of this volume, I reprint two chapters from another essay of mine, (*The Cestus of Aglaia*) * on modesty or measure, and on liberty, containing farther reference to music in her two powers; and I do this now, because, among the many monstrous and misbegotten fantasies which are the spawn of modern licence, perhaps the most impishly opposite to the truth is the conception of music which has rendered possible the writing, by educated persons, and, more strangely yet, the

* *Art Journal*, New Series, vols. iv. and v., 1865–1866 [1883].[2]

---

[1] [On the place of music in education, compare also *Time and Tide*, § 42 (Vol. XVII. p. 353).]

[2] [See now, above, pp. 72–81, 120–133.]

Digitized by Google

tolerant criticism, of such words as these:—"*This so persuasive art is the only one that has no didactic efficacy, that engenders no emotions save such as are without issue on the side of moral truth, that expresses nothing of God, nothing of reason, nothing of human liberty.*" I will not give the author's name; the passage is quoted in the *Westminster Review* for last January (1869), p. 153.[1]

43. I must also anticipate something of what I have to say respecting the relation of the power of Athena to organic life, so far as to note that her name, Pallas, probably refers to the quivering or vibration of the air;[2] and to its power, whether as vital force, or communicated wave, over every kind of matter, in giving it vibratory movement; first, and most intense, in the voice and throat of the bird, which is the air incarnate; and so descending through the various orders of animal life to the vibrating and semi-voluntary murmur of the insect; and, lower still, to the hiss, or quiver of the tail, of the half-lunged snake and deaf adder; all these, nevertheless, being wholly under the rule of Athena as representing either breath, or vital nervous power; and, therefore, also, in their simplicity, the "oaten pipe and pastoral song,"[3] which belong to her dominion over the asphodel meadows, and breathe on their banks of violets.

Finally, is it not strange to think of the influence of this one power of Pallas in vibration; (we shall see a singular mechanical energy of it presently in the serpent's motion[4]), in the voices of war and peace? How much of the repose—how much of the wrath, folly, and misery of men, has literally depended on this one power of the air;—

[1] [In an article entitled "Art and Morality," being a review of *Le Sentiment de la Nature avant le Christianisme* (1866), and *Le Sentiment de la Nature chez les Modernes* (1868), by Victor Richard de Laprade.]

[2] [From πάλλω, to quiver. Some say that the goddess was so called as the brandisher of the spear; others derive the word from πάλλαξ, Doric for παῖς, the maiden.]

[3] [Collins, *Ode to Evening:* "If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song"; compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 10 (above, p. 62).]

[4] [See below, pp. 361–363.]

Digitized by Google

on the sound of the trumpet and of the bell—on the lark's song, and the bee's murmur!

44. Such is the general conception in the Greek mind of the physical power of Athena. The spiritual power associated with it is of two kinds:—first, she is the Spirit of Life in material organism; not strength in the blood only, but formative energy in the clay: and, secondly, she is inspired and impulsive wisdom in human conduct and human art, giving the instinct of infallible decision, and of faultless invention.

It is quite beyond the scope of my present purpose—and, indeed, will only be possible for me at all after marking the relative intention of the Apolline myths—to trace for you the Greek conception of Athena as the guide of moral passion. But I will at least endeavour, on some near occasion,* to define some of the actual truths respecting the vital force in created organism, and inventive fancy in the works of man, which are more or less expressed by the Greeks, under the personality of Athena. You would, perhaps, hardly bear with me if I endeavoured farther to show you—what is nevertheless perfectly true—the analogy between the spiritual power of Athena in her gentle ministry, yet irresistible anger, with the ministry of another Spirit whom we also, believing in as[1] the universal power of life, are forbidden, at our worst peril, to quench or to grieve.[2]

45. But, I think, to-night, you should not let me close, without requiring of me an answer on one vital point, namely, how far these imaginations of Gods—which are vain to us—were vain to those who had no better trust? and what real belief the Greek had in these creations of

* I have tried to do this in mere outline in the two following sections of this volume.

---

[1] ["Believing in as" was substituted in 1883 for "holding for."]

[2] [1 Thessalonians v. 19: "Quench not the Spirit." Ephesians iv. 30: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."]

Digitized by Google

his own spirit, practical and helpful to him in the sorrow of earth? I am able to answer you explicitly in this. The origin of his thoughts is often obscure, and we may err in endeavouring to account for their form of realization; but the effect of that realization on his life is not obscure at all. The Greek creed was, of course, different in its character, as our own creed is, according to the class of persons who held it. The common people's was quite literal, simple, and happy: their idea of Athena was as clear as a good Roman Catholic peasant's idea of the Madonna. In Athens itself, the centre of thought and refinement, Pisistratus obtained the reins of government through the ready belief of the populace that a beautiful woman, armed like Athena, was the goddess herself.[1] Even at the close of the last century some of this simplicity remained among the inhabitants of the Greek islands; and when a pretty English lady[2] first made her way into the grotto of Antiparos, she was surrounded, on her return, by all the women of the neighbouring village, believing her to be divine, and praying her to heal them of their sicknesses.

46. Then, secondly, the creed of the upper classes was more refined and spiritual, but quite as honest, and even more forcible in its effect on the life. You might imagine that the employment of the artifice just referred to implied utter unbelief in the persons contriving it; but it really meant only that the more worldly of them would play with a popular faith for their own purposes, as doubly-minded persons have often done since, all the while sincerely holding

[1] [See the note at Vol. VII. p. 277 (*Modern Painters*, vol. v.), where Ruskin cites this incident as evidence of "the reality of Greek belief."]

[2] [Lady Craven (Margravine of Anspach,) whose portrait by Romney is in the National Gallery (No. 1669). See *Letters from the Right Honourable Lady Craven to his Serene Highness the Margrave of Anspach*, 1814, p. 219 (a letter dated from Athens, May 21, 1786): "I was now much surprised to find myself surrounded by Greek peasant women, one pointing to her head, another to her stomach, a third to her arm, all bewailing their ill state of health, and touching my clothes with devotion. I found at last, that hearing a woman had descended, they took her to be a Supernatural Being, and were perfectly convinced I could cure all disorders."]

Digitized by Google

the same ideas themselves in a more abstract form; while the good and unworldly men, the true Greek heroes, lived by their faith as firmly as S. Louis, or the Cid, or the Chevalier Bayard.[1]

47. Then, thirdly, the faith of the poets and artists was, necessarily, less definite, being continually modified by the involuntary action of their own fancies; and by the necessity of presenting, in clear verbal or material form, things of which they had no authoritative knowledge. Their faith was, in some respects, like Dante's or Milton's: firm in general conception, but not able to vouch for every detail in the forms they gave it: but they went considerably farther, even in that minor sincerity, than subsequent poets; and strove with all their might to be as near the truth as they could. Pindar says, quite simply, "I cannot think so-and-so of the Gods. It must have been this way—it cannot have been that way—that the thing was done."[2] And as late among the Latins as the days of Horace, this sincerity remains. Horace is just as true and simple in his religion as Wordsworth;[3] but all power of understanding any of the honest classic poets has been taken away from most English gentlemen by the mechanical drill in verse-writing at school. Throughout the whole of their lives afterwards, they never can get themselves quit of the notion that all verses were written as an exercise, and that Minerva was only a convenient word for the last of an hexameter, and Jupiter for the last but one.

48. It is impossible that any notion can be more fallacious or more misleading in its consequences. All great song, from the first day when human lips contrived syllables, has been sincere song. With deliberate didactic purpose the tragedians—with pure and native passion the

[1] [For St. Louis as a type, see Vol. XII. p. 138; for the Cid, *Munera Pulveris*, § 35 (Vol. XVII. p. 167), and *Eagle's Nest*, § 240; for Bayard, Vol. XII. p. 55, and *Val d'Arno*, § 274.]

[2] [See the passage about the legend of Tantalus, cited in the note on p. 316, above.]

[3] [Compare the Rede Lecture, § 13 (above, p. 173), and *Val d'Arno*, §§ 218 *seq.*]

Digitized by Google

lyrists—fitted their perfect words to their dearest faiths. "Operosa parvus carmina fingo."[1] "I, little thing that I am, weave my laborious songs" as earnestly as the bee among the bells of thyme on the Matin mountains. Yes, and he dedicates his favourite pine to Diana, and he chants his autumnal hymn to Faunus guarding[2] his fields, and he guides the noble youths and maids of Rome in their choir to Apollo, and he tells the farmer's little girl that the Gods will love her, though she has only a handful of salt and meal to give them[3]—just as earnestly as ever English gentleman taught Christian faith to English youth, in England's truest days.

49. Then, lastly, the creed of the philosophers or sages varied according to the character and knowledge of each;—their relative acquaintance with the secrets of natural science—their intellectual and sectarian egotism—and their mystic or monastic tendencies, for there is a classic as well as a mediæval monasticism. They ended in losing the life of Greece in play upon words; but we owe to their early thought some of the soundest ethics, and the foundation of the best practical laws, yet known to mankind.

50. Such was the general vitality of the heathen creed in its strength. Of its direct influence on conduct, it is, as I said, impossible for me to speak now; only, remember always, in endeavouring to form a judgment of it, that what of good or right the heathens did, they did looking

[1] [Horace: *Odes*, iv. 2, 27–32:—

"Ego apis matinæ
More modoque
Grata carpentis thyma per laborem
Plurimum circa nemus uvidique
Tiburis ripas operosa parvus
Carmina fingo."

Quoted also in *Val d'Arno*, § 221, and referred to in *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 42 (above, p. 94).]

[2] ["Faunus guarding" was substituted in 1883 for "the Faun that guards."]

[3] [The references here are to *Odes*, iii. 22—which in a list of titles for all the *Odes* Ruskin calls "Diana's Pine"; iii. 18 ("Faune, Nympharum"); i. 21 ("Dianam teneræ. . . . Vos Tempe totidem. . . . Natalemque, mares, Delon Apollinis"); and iii. 23, 17–20.]

Digitized by Google

for no reward.[1] The purest forms of our own religion have always consisted in sacrificing less things to win greater;—time, to win eternity,—the world, to win the skies. The order, "sell that thou hast," is not given without the promise,—"thou shalt have treasure in heaven;"[2] and well for the modern Christian if he accepts the alternative as his Master left it—and does not practically read the command and promise thus: "Sell that thou hast in the best market, and thou shalt have treasure in eternity also." But the poor Greeks of the great ages expected no reward from heaven but honour, and no reward from earth but rest;—though, when, on those conditions, they patiently, and proudly, fulfilled their task of the granted day, an unreasoning instinct of an immortal benediction broke from their lips in song: and they, even they, had sometimes a prophet to tell them of a land "where there is sun alike by day, and alike by night — where they shall need no more to trouble the earth by strength of hands for daily bread—but the ocean breezes blow around the blessed islands, and golden flowers burn on their bright trees for evermore."[3]

[1] [On this aspect of Greek conduct, compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, Vol. XVIII. p. 398.]

[2] [Matthew xix. 21.]

[3] [Rendered freely from Pindar, *Olymp.*, ii. 109-130. Compare § 84, below, p. 375; and, again, the end of the author's Introduction to *Crown of Wild Olive* (Vol. XVIII. p. 399).]

Digitized by Google

II

ATHENA KERAMITIS*

(*Athena in the Earth*)

Study, supplementary to the preceding lecture, of the supposed, and actual, relations of Athena to the vital force in material organism.

51. It has been easy to decipher approximately the Greek conception of the physical power of Athena in cloud and sky, because we know ourselves what clouds and skies are, and what the force of the wind is in forming them. But it is not at all easy to trace the Greek thoughts about the power of Athena in giving life, because we do not ourselves know clearly what life is, or in what way the air is necessary to it, or what there is, besides the air, shaping the forms that it is put into. And it is comparatively of small consequence to find out what the Greeks thought or meant, until we have determined what we ourselves think, or mean, when we translate the Greek word for "breathing" into the Latin-English word "spirit."

52. But it is of great consequence that you should fix in your minds—and hold, against the baseness of mere materialism on the one hand, and against the fallacies of controversial speculation on the other—the certain and practical sense of this word "spirit";—the sense in which you may all know that its reality exists, as the power which shaped you into your shape, and by which you love, and hate, when you have received that shape. You need not

* "Athena, fit for being made into pottery." I coin the expression[1] as a counterpart of γῆ παρθένια, "Clay intact."

[1] [That is, the application of the epithet to Athena; the word κεραμῖτις itself being often used with γῆ for "potter's earth."]

Digitized by Google

fear, on the one hand, that either the sculpturing or the loving power can ever be beaten down by the philosophers into a metal or evolved by them into a gas: but, on the other hand, take care that you yourselves, in trying to elevate your conception of it, do not lose its truth in a dream, or even in a word. Beware always of contending for words: you will find them not easy to grasp, if you know them in several languages. This very word, which is so solemn in your mouths, is one of the most doubtful. In Latin it means little more than breathing, and may mean merely accent; in French it is not breath, but wit, and our neighbours are therefore obliged, even in their most solemn expressions, to say "wit" when we say "ghost." In Greek, "pneuma," the word we translate "ghost," means either wind or breath,[1] and the relative word "psyche" has, perhaps, a more subtle power; yet St. Paul's words "pneumatic body" and "psychic body"[2] involve a difference in his mind which no words will explain. But in Greek and in English, and in Saxon and in Hebrew, and in every articulate tongue of humanity, the "spirit of man" truly means his passion and virtue, and is stately according to the height of his conception, and stable according to the measure of his endurance.

53. Endurance, or patience, that is the central sign of spirit; a constancy against the cold and agony of death; and as, physically, it is by the burning power of the air that the heat of the flesh is sustained, so this Athena, spiritually, is the queen of all glowing virtue, the unconsuming fire and inner lamp of life. And thus, as Hephæstus* is lord of the fire of the hand, and Apollo of the fire of the brain, so Athena of the fire of the heart; and as

* Vulcan (mulciber) [1883].

[1] Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 23 (Vol. XVIII. p. 73). See also *Proserpina*, ii. ch. v. § 1, where Ruskin says that the present paragraph defines the sense in which the word "spirit" is used throughout his writings, and refers to §§ 59, 60, "with respect to its office in plants."]

[2] [1 Corinthians xv. 44: ἔστι σῶμα ψυχικόν, καὶ ἔστι σῶμα πνευματικόν. Translated in our version: "There is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."]

Digitized by Google

Hercules wears for his chief armour the skin of the Nemean lion, his chief enemy, whom he slew; and Apollo has for his highest name "the Pythian," from his chief enemy, the Python, slain;[1] so Athena bears always on her breast the deadly face of her chief enemy slain, the Gorgonian cold, and venomous agony, that turns living men to stone.

54. And so long as you have that fire of the heart within you, and know the reality of it, you need be under no alarm as to the possibility of its chemical or mechanical analysis. The philosophers are very humorous in their ecstasy of hope about it; but the real interest of their discoveries in this direction is very small to human kind. It is quite true that the tympanum of the ear vibrates under sound, and that the surface of the water in a ditch vibrates too: but the ditch hears nothing for all that; and my hearing is still to me as blessed a mystery as ever, and the interval between the ditch and me, quite as great. If the trembling sound in my ears was once of the marriage bell which began my happiness, and is now of the passing bell which ends it, the difference between those two sounds to me cannot be counted by the number of concussions. There have been some curious speculations lately as to the conveyance of mental consciousness by "brain-waves."[2] What does it matter how it is conveyed? The consciousness itself is not a wave. It may be accompanied here or there by any quantity of quivers and shakes, up or down, of anything you can find in the universe that is shakeable —what is that to me? My friend is dead, and my—according to modern views—vibratory sorrow is not one whit less, or less mysterious to me, than my old quiet one.

55. Beyond, and entirely unaffected by, any questionings of this kind, there are, therefore, two plain facts which we should all know: first, that there is a power which gives their several shapes to things, or capacities of shape; and,

[1] [Compare Vol. VII. p. 420 and *n.*]

[2] [Speculations which assumed vibrations in "mentipherous ether" and which the Psychical Research Society afterwards took up under the head of "telepathy" (see *Proceedings S. P. R.*, October 1886, p. 178.]

Digitized by Google

secondly, a power which gives them their several feelings, or capacities of feeling; and that we can increase or destroy both of these at our will. By care and tenderness, we can extend the range of lovely life in plants and animals; by our neglect and cruelty, we can arrest it, and bring pestilence in its stead. Again, by right discipline we can increase our strength of noble will and passion, or destroy both. And whether these two forces are local conditions of the elements in which they appear, or are part of a great force in the universe, out of which they are taken, and to which they must be restored, is not of the slightest importance to us in dealing with them; neither is the manner of their connection with light and air. What precise meaning we ought to attach to expressions such as that of the prophecy to the four winds that the dry bones might be breathed upon,[1] and might live, or why the presence of the vital power should be dependent on the chemical action of the air, and its awful passing away materially signified by the rendering up of that breath or ghost, we cannot at present know, and need not at any time dispute. What we assuredly know is that the states of life and death are different, and the first more desirable than the other, and by effort attainable, whether we understand being "born of the spirit"[2] to signify having the breath of heaven in our flesh, or its power in our hearts.

56. As to its power on the body, I will endeavour to tell you, having been myself much led into studies involving necessary reference both to natural science and mental phenomena, what, at least, remains to us after science has done its worst;—what the Myth of Athena, as a Formative and Decisive power—a Spirit of Creation and Volition, —must eternally mean for all of us.

57. It is now (I believe I may use the strong word) "ascertained" that heat and motion are fixed in quantity,

[1] [Ezekiel i. 1–9.]
[2] [John iii. 5.]

Digitized by Google

and measurable in the portions that we deal with.[1] We can measure out portions of power, as we can measure portions of space; while yet, as far as we know, space may be infinite, and force infinite. There may be heat as much greater than the sun's, as the sun's heat is greater than a candle's; and force as much greater than the force by which the world swings, as that is greater than the force by which a cobweb trembles. Now, on heat and force, life is inseparably dependent; and I believe, also, on a form of substance, which the philosophers call "protoplasm."[2] I wish they would use English instead of Greek words. When I want to know why a leaf is green, they tell me it is coloured by "chlorophyll,"[3] which at first sounds very instructive; but if they would only say plainly that a leaf is coloured green by a thing which is called "green leaf," we should see more precisely how far we had got. However, it is a curious fact that life is connected with a cellular structure called protoplasm, or, in English, "first stuck together": whence conceivably through deutoroplasms, or second stickings, and tritoplasms, or third stickings,* we reach the highest plastic phase in the human pottery, which differs from common china-ware, primarily, by a measurable degree of heat, developed in breathing,

* Or, perhaps, we may be indulged with one consummating gleam of "glycasm"—visible "Sweetness,"—according to the good old monk "Full moon," or "All moonshine." I cannot get at his original Greek, but am content with M. Durand's clear French (*Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne.* Paris, 1845[4]):—"Lorsque vous aurez fait le proplasme, et esquissé un visage, vous ferez les chairs avec le glycasme dont nous avons donné la recette. . . . Chez les vieillards, vous indiquerez les rides, et chez les jeunes gens, les angles des yeux. . . . C'est ainsi que l'on fait les chairs, suivant Pansélinos."

---

[1] [Tyndall's *Heat as a Mode of Motion* had been published in 1863.]

[2] [The word, first used by Hugo Von Mohl in 1846, was popularized in this country in 1868 by Huxley in his address on "The Physical Basis of Life" (see his *Lay Sermons*, vii.).]

[3] [Compare *Academy Notes*, 1875 (Vol. XIV. p. 283).]

[4] [*Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne Grecque et Latine avec une Introduction et des Notes, par M. Didron, traduit du Manuscrit Byzantin, Le Guide de la Peinture, par Dr. Paul Durand.* The quotation is at pp. 35, 36. For other references to the book, see Vol. X. p. 128 *n.*, and Vol. XII. p. 262.]

Digitized by Google

which it borrows from the rest of the universe while it lives, and which it as certainly returns to the rest of the universe, when it dies.

58. Again, with this heat certain assimilative powers are connected, which the tendency of recent discovery is to simplify more and more into modes of one force; or finally into mere motion, communicable in various states, but not destructible. We will assume that science has done its utmost; and that every chemical or animal force is demonstrably resolvable into heat or motion, reciprocally changing into each other. I would myself like better, in order of thought, to consider motion as a mode of heat than heat as a mode of motion; still, granting that we have got thus far, we have yet to ask, What is heat? or what, motion? What is this "primo mobile,"[1] this transitional power, in which all things live, and move, and have their being?[2] It is by definition something different from matter, and we may call it as we choose—"first cause," or "first light," or "first heat"; but we can show no scientific proof of its not being personal, and coinciding with the ordinary conception of a supporting spirit in all things.

59. Still, it is not advisable to apply the word "spirit" or "breathing" to it, while it is only enforcing chemical affinities; but, when the chemical affinities are brought under the influence of the air, and of the sun's heat, the formative force enters an entirely different phase. It does not now merely crystallize indefinite masses, but it gives to limited portions of matter the power of gathering, selectively, other elements proper to them, and binding these elements into their own peculiar and adopted form.

This force, now properly called life, or breathing, or spirit, is continually creating its own shells of definite shape out of the wreck around it: and this is what I meant by saying, in the *Ethics of the Dust*:—"you may always

[1] [See above, § 28, p. 324 *n.*]
[2] [Acts xvii. 28.]

Digitized by Google

stand by form against force."[1] For the mere force of junction is not spirit; but the power that catches out of chaos charcoal, water, lime, or what not, and fastens them down into a given form, is properly called "spirit"; and we shall not diminish, but strengthen our conception of this creative energy by recognizing its presence in lower states of matter than our own;—such recognition being enforced upon us by a delight we instinctively receive from all the forms of matter which manifest it: and yet more, by the glorifying of those forms, in the parts of them that are most animated, with the colours that are pleasantest to our senses. The most familiar instance of this is the best, and also the most wonderful:—the blossoming of plants.

60. The Spirit in the plant—that is to say, its power of gathering dead matter out of the wreck round it, and shaping it into its own chosen shape,—is of course strongest at the moment of its flowering, for it then not only gathers, but forms, with the greatest energy.

And where this Life is in it at full power, its form becomes invested with aspects that are chiefly delightful to our own human passions; namely, first, with the loveliest outlines of shape: and, secondly, with the most brilliant phases of the primary colours, blue, yellow, and red or white, the unison of all;[2] and, to make it all more strange, this time of peculiar and perfect glory is associated with relations of the plants or blossoms to each other, correspondent to the joy of love in human creatures, and having the same object in the continuance of the race. Only, with respect to plants, as animals, we are wrong in speaking as if the object of this strong life were only the bequeathing of itself. The flower is the end or proper object of the seed, not the seed of the flower. The reason for seeds is that flowers may be; not the reason of flowers that seeds may be. The flower itself is the creature which

[1] [§ 107; Vol. XVIII. p. 342.]
[2] [With this passage compare the discussion of Vital Beauty in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 146 *seq.*).]

Digitized by Google

the spirit makes; only, in connection with its perfectness, is placed the giving birth to its successor.[1]

61. The main fact, then, about a flower is that it is the part of the plant's form developed at the moment of its intensest life: and this inner rapture is usually marked externally for us by the flush of one or more of the primary colours. What the character of the flower shall be, depends entirely upon the portion of the plant into which this rapture of spirit has been put. Sometimes the life is put into its outer sheath, and then the outer sheath becomes white and pure, and full of strength and grace; sometimes the life is put into the common leaves, just under the blossom, and they become scarlet or purple; sometimes the life is put into the stalks of the flower, and they flush blue; sometimes in its outer enclosure or calyx; mostly into its inner cup; but in all cases, the presence of the strongest life is asserted by characters in which the human sight takes pleasure, and which seem prepared with distinct reference to us, or rather, bear, in being delightful, evidence of having been produced by the power of the same spirit as our own.

62. And we are led to feel this still more strongly, because all the distinctions of species,* both in plants and animals, appear to have similar connection with human character. Whatever the origin of species may be, or however those species, once formed, may be influenced by external accident, the groups into which birth or accident reduce them have distinct relation to the spirit of man. It

* The facts on which I am about to dwell are in nowise antagonistic to the theories which Mr. Darwin's unwearied and unerring investigations are every day rendering more probable.[2] The æsthetic relations of species are independent of their origin. Nevertheless, it has always seemed to me, in what little work I have done upon organic forms, as if the species mocked us by their deliberate imitation of each other when they met: yet did not pass one into another.

---

[1] [Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. iv., and *Præterita*, i. § 59.]

[2] [For Ruskin's personal acquaintance with Darwin at this time, see Introduction; above, p. xlv.]

Digitized by Google

is perfectly possible, and ultimately conceivable, that the crocodile and the lamb may have descended from the same ancestral atom of protoplasm; and that the physical laws of the operation of calcareous slime and of meadow grass, on that protoplasm, may in time have developed the opposite natures and aspects of the living frames; but the practically important fact for us is the existence of a power which creates that calcareous earth itself;—which creates that, separately, and quartz, separately, and gold, separately, and charcoal, separately; and then so directs the relations of these elements that the gold may destroy the souls of men by being yellow; and the charcoal destroy their souls by being hard and bright; and the quartz represent to them an ideal purity; and the calcareous earth, soft, may beget crocodiles, and dry and hard, sheep; and that the aspects and qualities of these two products, crocodiles and lambs, may be, the one repellent to the spirit of man, the other attractive to it, in a quite inevitable way, representing to him states of moral evil and good, and becoming myths to him of destruction or redemption, and, in the most literal sense, "Words" of God.

63. And the force of these facts cannot be escaped from by the thought that there are species innumerable, passing into each other by regular gradations, out of which we choose what we most love or dread, and say they were indeed prepared for us. Species are not innumerable; neither are they now connected by consistent gradation. They touch at certain points only; and even then are connected, when we examine them deeply, in a kind of reticulated way, not in chains, but in chequers; also, however connected, it is but by a touch of the extremities, as it were, and the characteristic form of the species is entirely individual. The rose nearly sinks into a grass in the sanguisorba;[1] but the formative spirit does not the less clearly separate the ear of wheat from the dog-rose, and oscillate

[1] [The Common Burnet and Lady's-mantle are examples of the *sanguisorba*, which Linnæus identified with the order *Rosaceæ*.]

Digitized by Google

with tremulous constancy round the central forms of both, having each their due relation to the mind of man. The great animal kingdoms are connected in the same way. The bird through the penguin drops towards the fish, and the fish in the cetacean reascends to the mammal, yet there is no confusion of thought possible between the perfect forms of an eagle, a trout, and a war-horse, in their relations to the elements, and to man.

64. Now we have two orders of animals to take some note of in connection with Athena, and one vast order of plants, which will illustrate this matter very sufficiently for us.

The two orders of animals are the serpent and the bird; the serpent, in which the breath, or spirit, is less than in any other creature, and the earth-power greatest:—the bird, in which the breath, or spirit, is more full than in any other creature, and the earth-power least.

65. We will take the bird first. It is little more than a drift of the air brought into form by plumes; the air is in all its quills, it breathes through its whole frame and flesh, and glows with air in its flying, like a blown flame: it rests upon the air, subdues it, surpasses it, outraces it;—*is* the air, conscious of itself, conquering itself, ruling itself.

Also, into the throat of the bird is given the voice of the air. All that in the wind itself is weak, wild, useless in sweetness, is knit together in its song. As we may imagine the wild form of the cloud closed into the perfect form of the bird's wings, so the wild voice of the cloud into its ordered and commanded voice; unwearied, rippling through the clear heaven in its gladness, interpreting all intense passion through the soft spring nights, bursting into acclaim and rapture of choir at daybreak, or lisping and twittering among the boughs and hedges through heat of day, like little winds that only make the cowslip bells shake, and ruffle the petals of the wild rose.

66. Also, upon the plumes of the bird are put the colours of the air: on these the gold of the cloud, that cannot be

Digitized by Google

gathered by any covetousness; the rubies of the clouds, that are not the price of Athena, but *are* Athena; the vermilion of the cloud-bar, and the flame of the cloud-crest, and the snow of the cloud, and its shadow, and the melted blue of the deep wells of the sky—all these, seized by the creating spirit, and woven by Athena herself into films and threads of plume; with wave on wave following and fading along breast, and throat, and opened wings, infinite as the dividing of the foam and the sifting of the sea-sand;—even the white down of the cloud seeming to flutter up between the stronger plumes, seen, but too soft for touch.

And so the Spirit of the Air is put into, and upon, this created form; and it becomes, through twenty centuries, the symbol of Divine help, descending, as the Fire, to speak, but as the Dove, to bless.

67. Next, in the serpent we approach the source of a group of myths, world-wide, founded on great and common human instincts, respecting which I must note one or two points which bear intimately on all our subject.[1] For it seems to me that the scholars who are at present occupied in interpretation of human myths have most of them forgotten that there are any such things as natural myths; and that the dark sayings of men may be both difficult to read, and not always worth reading; but the dark sayings of nature will probably become clearer for the looking into, and will very certainly be worth reading. And, indeed, all guidance to the right sense of the human and variable myths will probably depend on our first getting at the sense of the natural and invariable ones. The dead hieroglyph may have meant this or that—the living hieroglyph means always the same; but remember, it is just as much a hieroglyph as the other; nay, more,—a "sacred or reserved sculpture," a thing with an inner language. The serpent crest of the king's crown, or of the god's, on the pillars of Egypt, is a mystery; but the serpent itself, gliding past the pillar's foot, is it less a mystery? Is there, indeed, no tongue, except

[1] [Compare what Ruskin says of the serpent in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 26.]

Digitized by Google

the mute forked flash from its lips, in that running brook of horror on the ground?

68. Why that horror? We all feel it, yet how imaginative it is, how disproportioned to the real strength of the creature! There is more poison in an ill-kept drain,—in a pool of dish-washings at a cottage door,—than in the deadliest asp of Nile. Every back-yard which you look down into from the railway, as it carries you out by Vauxhall or Deptford, holds its coiled serpent:[1] all the walls of those ghastly suburbs are enclosures of tank temples for serpent worship; yet you feel no horror in looking down into them, as you would if you saw the livid scales and lifted head. There is more venom, mortal, inevitable, in a single word sometimes, or in the gliding entrance of a wordless thought, than ever "vanti Libia con sua rena."[2] But that horror is of the myth, not of the creature. There are myriads lower than this, and more loathsome, in the scale of being; the links between dead matter and animation drift everywhere unseen. But it is the strength of the base element that is so dreadful in the serpent; it is the very omnipotence of the earth. That rivulet of smooth silver—how does it flow, think you? It literally rows on the earth, with every scale for an oar; it bites the dust with the ridges of its body. Watch it, when it moves slowly:—A wave, but without wind! a current, but with no fall![3] all the body moving at the same instant, yet some of it to one side, some to another, or some forward, and the rest of the coil backwards; but all with the same calm will and equal way—no contraction, no extension; one soundless, causeless march of sequent rings, and spectral procession of spotted dust, with dissolution in its fangs, dislocation in its coils. Startle it;—the winding stream will become a twisted arrow;—the wave of

[1] [For other passages in which Ruskin notes the horror of the approaches to London, see *Lectures on Art*, § 122; *Val d'Arno*, § 33; and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 44 and 64.]

[2] [*Inferno*, xxiv. 85, where Dante describes a crowd of terrible serpents, so strange and hideous that "let Libya vaunt no more of her sands."]

[3] [Compare the lecture on Snakes, included under the title "Living Waves" in *Deucalion*, ii. ch. i. § 35, where Ruskin quotes this description.]

Digitized by Google

poisoned life will lash through the grass like a cast lance.* It scarcely breathes with its one lung (the other shrivelled and abortive); it is passive to the sun and shade, and is cold or hot like a stone; yet, "it can outclimb the monkey, outswim the fish, outleap the jerboa, outwrestle the athlete, and crush the tiger."† It is a divine hieroglyph of the demoniac power of the earth,—of the entire earthly nature. As the bird is the clothed power of the air, so this is the clothed power of the dust; as the bird the symbol of the spirit of life, so this of the grasp and sting of death.

69. Hence the continual change in the interpretation put upon it in various religions. As the worm of corruption, it is the mightiest of all adversaries of the gods—the special adversary of their light and creative power—Python against Apollo. As the power of the earth against the air, the giants are serpent-bodied in the Gigantomachia;[1] but as the power of the earth upon the seed—consuming it into new life ("that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die"[2])—serpents sustain the chariot of the spirit of agriculture.

* I cannot understand this swift forward motion of serpents. The seizure of prey by the constrictor, though invisibly swift, is quite simple in mechanism; it is simply the return to its coil of an opened watchspring, and is just as instantaneous. But the steady and continuous motion, without a visible fulcrum (for the whole body moves at the same instant, and I have often seen even small snakes glide as fast as I could walk), seems to involve a vibration of the scales quite too rapid to be conceived. The motion of the crest and dorsal fin of the hippocampus,[3] which is one of the intermediate types between serpent and fish, perhaps gives some resemblance of it, dimly visible, for the quivering turns the fin into a mere mist. The entrance of the two barbs of a bee's sting by alternate motion, "the teeth of one barb acting as a fulcrum for the other," must be something like the serpent motion on a small scale. (Note of 1883. Cp. the Lecture "A Caution to Snakes," *Deucalion*, Part VII.[4])

† Richard Owen.[5]

[1] [Best seen in the reliefs of the battle of the gods and giants on the great altar of Pergamon (now at Berlin).]

[2] [1 Corinthians xv. 36.]

[3] [See Ruskin's drawing of "the sea-horse of Venice": Plate 5 in Vol. IV. p. 154.]

[4] [So the reviser printed in 1883. The note itself, however, was in the original editions. Only the reference to *Deucalion* is the "Note of 1883."]

[5] [*On the Anatomy of Vertebrates, vol. i., Fishes and Reptiles*, 1866, p. 261. "Jerboa" in Ruskin's quotation has hitherto been misprinted "zebra."]

Digitized by Google

70. Yet, on the other hand, there is a power in the earth to take away corruption, and to purify, (hence the very fact of burial, and many uses of earth, only lately known);[1] and in this sense, the serpent is a healing spirit,—the representative of Æsculapius, and of Hygieia; and is a sacred earth-type in the temple of the Dew;—being there especially a symbol of the native earth of Athens; so that its departure from the temple was a sign to the Athenians that they were to leave their homes.[2] And then, lastly, as there is a strength and healing in the earth, no less than the strength of air, so there is conceived to be a wisdom of earth no less than a wisdom of the spirit; and when its deadly power is killed, its guiding power becomes true; so that the Python serpent is killed at Delphi, where yet the oracle is from the breath of the earth.

71. You must remember, however, that in this, as in every other instance, I take the myth at its central time. This is only the meaning of the serpent to the Greek mind which could conceive an Athena. Its first meaning to the nascent eyes of men, and its continued influence over degraded races, are subjects of the most fearful mystery. Mr. Fergusson has just collected the principal evidence bearing on the matter in a work of very great value,[3] and if you read his opening chapters, they will put you in possession of the circumstances needing chiefly to be considered. I cannot touch upon any of them here, except only to point out that, though the doctrine of the so-called "corruption of human nature," asserting that there is nothing but evil in humanity, is just as blasphemous and false as a doctrine of the corruption of physical nature would be, asserting there was nothing but evil in the earth,—there is yet the clearest evidence of a disease,

[1] [The Rev. Henry Moule (1801–1880) had first invented the dry-earth system of sanitation in 1860.]

[2] [Before the battle of Salamis: see Herodotus, viii. 41.]

[3] [*Tree and Serpent Worship; or, Illustrations of Mythology and Art in India . . . with Introductory Essays and Descriptions of the Plates*, by James Fergusson, F.R.S.: India Museum, 1868.]

Digitized by Google

plague, or cretinous imperfection of development, hitherto allowed to prevail against the greater part of the races of men;[1] and this in monstrous ways, more full of mystery than the serpent-being itself. I have gathered for you to-night only instances of what is beautiful in Greek religion; but even in its best time there were deep corruptions in other phases of it, and degraded forms of many of its deities, all originating in a misunderstood worship of the principle of life; while in the religions of lower races, little else than these corrupted forms of devotion can be found;—all having a strange and dreadful consistency with each other, and infecting Christianity, even at its strongest periods, with fatal terror of doctrine, and ghastliness of symbolic conception, passing through fear into frenzied grotesque, and thence into sensuality.

In the Psalter of S. Louis itself, half of its letters are twisted snakes;[2] there is scarcely a wreathed ornament, employed in Christian dress, or architecture, which cannot be traced back to the serpent's coil; and there is rarely a piece of monkish decorated writing in the world, that is not tainted with some ill-meant vileness of grotesque—nay, the very leaves of the twisted ivy-pattern of the fourteenth century can be followed back to wreaths for the foreheads of bacchanalian gods. And truly, it seems to me, as I gather in my mind the evidences of insane religion, degraded art, merciless war, sullen toil, detestable pleasure, and vain or vile hope, in which the nations of the world have lived since first they could bear record of themselves—it seems to me, I say, as if the race itself were still half-serpent, not extricated yet from its clay; a lacertine breed of bitterness—the glory of it emaciate with cruel hunger, and blotted with venomous stain: and the track of it, on the leaf a glittering slime, and in the sand a useless furrow.

[1] [With this passage compare Ruskin's letter of June 8, 1869, given in the Introduction; above, p. 1. Compare also *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 106–107 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 474–475).]

[2] [Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, §§ 50, 53 (above, pp. 100–102).]

Digitized by Google

72. There are no myths, therefore, by which the moral state and fineness of intelligence of different races can be so deeply tried or measured, as by those of the serpent and the bird; both of them having an especial relation to the kind of remorse for sin, or grief in fate, of which the national minds that spoke by them had been capable. The serpent and vulture are alike emblems of immortality and purification among races which desired to be immortal and pure: and as they recognize their own misery, the serpent becomes to them the scourge of the Furies, and the vulture finds its eternal prey in their breast. The bird long contests, among the Egyptians, with the still received serpent, the symbol of power. But the Draconian image of evil is established in the serpent Apap;[1] while the bird's wings, with the globe, become part of a better symbol of deity, and the entire form of the vulture, as an emblem of purification, is associated with the earliest conception of Athena.[2] In the type of the dove with the olive branch, the conception of the spirit of Athena in renewed life prevailing over ruin, is embodied for the whole of futurity; while the Greeks, to whom, in a happier climate and higher life than that of Egypt, the vulture symbol of cleansing became unintelligible, took the eagle, instead, for their hieroglyph of supreme spiritual energy, and it thenceforward retains its hold on the human imagination, till it is established among Christian myths as the expression of the most exalted form of evangelistic teaching.[3] The special relation of Athena to her favourite bird we will trace presently;[4] the peacock of Hera, and dove of Aphrodite, are comparatively unimportant myths: but the

[1] ["The battle in heaven with the gigantic Apap, or great serpent; his (Ra's) final triumph, and strangling of the dragon, and his diurnal renewal of the fray, formed the subject of the walls of the tombs and sarcophagi at the time of the 18th and subsequent dynasties" (Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, ed. 1878, vol. iii. p. 59). Compare *Cestus of Aglaia*, § 31 (above, p. 84).]

[2] [That is, of Neith, the Egyptian form of Athena, who is often represented as vulture-headed.]

[3] [See further on this subject "The Eagle of Elis" in Vol. XX.]

[4] [See below, p. 381.]

Digitized by Google

bird power is soon made entirely human by the Greeks in their flying angel of victory (partially human, with modified meaning of evil, in the Harpy and Siren); and thenceforward it associates itself with the Hebrew cherubim, and has had the most singular influence on the Christian religion by giving its wings to render the conception of angels mysterious and untenable, and check rational endeavour to determine the nature of subordinate spiritual agency; while yet it has given to that agency a vague poetical influence of the highest value in its own imaginative way.[1]

73. But with the early serpent-worship there was associated another—that of the groves—of which you will also find the evidence exhaustively collected in Mr. Fergusson's work. This tree-worship may have taken a dark form when associated with the Draconian one; or opposed, as in Judea, to a purer faith;[2] but in itself, I believe, it was always healthy, and though it retains little definite hieroglyphic power in subsequent religion, it becomes instead of symbolic, real; the flowers and trees are themselves beheld and beloved with a half-worshipping delight, which is always noble and healthful.

And it is among the most notable indications of the volition of the animating power, that we find the ethical signs of good and evil set on these also, as well as upon animals; the venom of the serpent, and in some respects its image also, being associated even with the passionless growth of the leaf out of the ground; while the distinctions of species seem appointed with more definite ethical address to the intelligence of man as their material products become more useful to him.

74. I can easily show this, and, at the same time, make clear the relation to other plants of the flowers which especially belong to Athena, by examining the natural myths in the groups of the plants which would be

[1] [Compare *Ethics of the Dust*, §§ 113 *seq.* (Vol. XVIII. pp. 349–352).]
[2] [See Exodus xxiv. 13; Deuteronomy xvi. 21, etc.]

Digitized by Google

used at any country dinner, over which Athena would, in her simplest household authority, cheerfully rule, here, in England. Suppose Horace's favourite dish of beans,[1] with the bacon; potatoes; some savoury stuffing of onions and herbs with the meat; celery, and a radish or two, with the cheese; nuts and apples for dessert, and brown bread.

75. The beans are, from earliest time, the most important and interesting of the seeds of the great tribe of plants from which came the Latin and French name for all kitchen vegetables,—things that are gathered with the hand—podded seeds that cannot be reaped, or beaten, or shaken down, but must be gathered green. "Leguminous" plants, all of them having flowers like butterflies, seeds in (frequently pendent) pods,—"lætum siliqua quassante legumen"[2]—smooth and tender leaves, divided into many minor ones,—strange adjuncts of tendril, for climbing (and sometimes of thorn);—exquisitely sweet, yet pure, scents of blossom, and almost always harmless, if not serviceable, seeds. It is, of all tribes of plants, the most definite; its blossoms being entirely limited in their parts, and not passing into other forms. It is also the most usefully extended in range and scale; familiar in the height of the forest—acacia, laburnum, Judas-tree; familiar in the sown field—bean and vetch and pea; familiar in the pasture—in every form of clustered clover and sweet trefoil tracery; the most entirely serviceable and human of all orders of plants.

76. Next, in the potato, we have the scarcely innocent underground stem of one of a tribe set aside for evil;*

* Some two out of a hundred and fifty species of Solanum are useful to man [1883].

---

[1] [*Satires*, ii. 6, 63:—

"O quando faba Pythagoræ cognata, simulque
Uncta satis pingui ponentur oluscula lardo?
O noctes cœnæque deum!"

Compare Vol. XIV. p. 341.]

[2] [Virgil, *Georgics*, i. 74: "the pulse which is luxuriant with quivering pod"—a description of the bean. Compare *Proserpina*, i. ch. xi. § 16.]

Digitized by Google

having the deadly nightshade for its queen, and including the henbane, the witch's mandrake, and the worst natural curse of modern civilization—tobacco.* And the strange thing about this tribe is, that though thus set aside for evil, they are not a group distinctly separate from those that are happier in function. There is nothing in other tribes of plants like the form of the bean blossom; but there is another family with forms and structure closely connected with this venomous one. Examine the purple and yellow bloom of the common hedge nightshade; you will find it constructed exactly like some of the forms of the cyclamen; and, getting this clue, you will find at last the whole poisonous and terrible group to be—sisters of the primulas!

The nightshades are, in fact, primroses with a curse upon them; and a sign set in their petals, by which the deadly and condemned flowers may always be known from the innocent ones,—that the stamens of the nightshades are between the lobes, and of the primulas, opposite the lobes, of the corolla.

77. Next, side by side, in the celery and radish, you have the two great groups of umbelled and cruciferous plants; alike in conditions of rank among herbs: both flowering in clusters; but the umbelled group, flat, the crucifers, in spires:—both of them mean and poor in the blossom, and losing what beauty they have by too close crowding:—both of them having the most curious influence on human character in the temperate zones of the earth, from the days of the parsley crown, and hemlock drink, and mocked Euripidean chervil,[1] until now: but chiefly among the northern nations, being especially plants that

* It is not easy to estimate the demoralizing effect on the youth of Europe of the cigar, enabling them to pass their time happily in idleness.[2]

[1] [The reference is to Aristophanes, *Acharnians*, 478, where, taunting the poet with the lowly station of his mother as a herb-seller, he says σκάνδικά μοι δός, μητρόθεν δεδεγμένος ("give me chervil, and get it from your mother").]

[2] [Compare *Time and Tide*, § 18 (Vol. XVII. p. 334).]

Digitized by Google

are of some humble beauty, and (the crucifers) of endless use, when they are chosen and cultivated; but that run to wild waste, and are the signs of neglected ground, in their rank or ragged leaves, and meagre stalks, and pursed or podded seed clusters. Capable, even under cultivation, of no perfect beauty, though reaching some subdued delightfulness in the lady's smock and the wallflower; for the most part, they have every floral quality meanly, and in vain,—they are white, without purity; golden, without preciousness; redundant, without richness; divided, without fineness; massive, without strength; and slender, without grace. Yet think over that useful vulgarity of theirs; and of the relations of German and English peasant character to its food of kraut and cabbage, (as of Arab character to its food of palm-fruit,) and you will begin to feel what purposes of the forming spirit are in these distinctions of species.

78. Next we take the nuts and apples,—the nuts representing one of the groups of catkined trees, whose blossoms are only tufts and dust; and the other, the rose tribe, in which fruit and flower alike have been the types, to the highest races of men, of all passionate temptation, or pure delight, from the coveting of Eve to the crowning of the Madonna, above the

> "Rosa sempiterna,
> Che si dilata, rigrada, e ridole
> Odor di lode al Sol."[1]

We have no time now for these; we must go on to the humblest group of all, yet the most wonderful, that of the grass, which has given us our bread; and from that we will go back to the herbs.

79. The vast family of plants which, under rain, make the earth green for man; and, under sunshine, give him bread; and, in their springing in the early year, mixed with their native flowers, have given us (far more than the new

[1] [*Paradiso*, xxx. 124: the passage is referred to in Vol. V. p. 272.]

Digitized by Google

leaves of trees) the thought and word of "spring," divide themselves broadly into three great groups—the grasses, sedges, and rushes. The grasses are essentially a clothing for healthy and pure ground, watered by occasional rain, but in itself dry, and fit for all cultivated pasture and corn. They are distinctively plants with round and jointed stems, which have long green flexible leaves, and heads of seed, independently emerging from them. The sedges are essentially the clothing of waste and more or less poor or uncultivatable soils, coarse in their structure, frequently triangular in stem—hence called "acute" by Virgil[1]—and with their heads of seed not extricated from their leaves. Now, in both the sedges and grasses, the blossom has a common structure, though undeveloped in the sedges, but composed always of groups of double husks, which have mostly a spinous process in the centre, sometimes projecting into a long awn or beard; this central process being characteristic also of the ordinary leaves of mosses, as if a moss were a kind of ear of corn made permanently green on the ground, and with a new and distinct fructification. But the rushes differ wholly from the sedge and grass in their blossom structure. It is not a dual cluster, but a twice threefold one, so far separate from the grasses, and so closely connected with a higher order of plants, that I think you will find it convenient to group the rushes at once with that higher order, to which, if you will for the present let me give the general name of Drosidæ,[2] or dew-plants, it will enable me to say what I have to say of them much more shortly and clearly.

80. These Drosidæ, then, are plants delighting in interrupted moisture—moisture which comes either partially or at certain seasons—into dry ground. They are not water-plants; but the signs of water resting among dry places.

[1] [*Georgics*, iii. 231: "carice pastus acuta."]

[2] [For references to this name, see Ruskin's index to *Proserpina*. So also he calls the fritillary "Alfred's dew-flower": see *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, No. 13 (Vol. XX.).]

Digitized by Google

Many of the true water-plants have triple blossoms, with a small triple calyx holding them; in the Drosidæ, the floral spirit passes into the calyx also, and the entire flower becomes a six-rayed star, bursting out of the stem laterally, as if it were the first of flowers, and had made its way to the light by force through the unwilling green. They are often required to retain moisture or nourishment for the future blossom through long times of drought; and this they do in bulbs under ground, of which some become a rude and simple, but most wholesome food for man.

81. So now, observe, you are to divide the whole family of the herbs of the field into three great groups—Drosidæ, Carices,* Gramineæ—dew-plants, sedges, and grasses. Then the Drosidæ are divided into five great orders—lilies, asphodels, amaryllids, irids, and rushes. No tribes of flowers have had so great, so varied, or so healthy an influence on man as this great group of Drosidæ, depending not so much on the whiteness of some of their blossoms, or the radiance of others, as on the strength and delicacy of the substance of their petals; enabling them to take forms of faultless elastic curvature, either in cups, as the crocus, or expanding bells, as the true lily, or heath-like bells, as the hyacinth, or bright and perfect stars, like the star of Bethlehem, or, when they are affected by the strange reflex of the serpent nature which forms the labiate group of all flowers, closing into forms of exquisitely fantastic symmetry in the gladiolus. Put by their side their Nereid sisters, the water-lilies, and you have in them the origin of the loveliest forms of ornamental design, and the most powerful floral myths yet recognized among human spirits, born by the streams of Ganges, Nile, Arno, and Avon.[1]

* I think Carex will be found ultimately better than Cyperus for the generic name, being the Virgilian word, and representing a larger subspecies.

[1] [For the lotus (water-lily) as "the root of leaf ornament" in architecture, "founded on this gift of the waves of Nile," and for the "lily capital," see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. pp. 279–280, 387). The myths and artistic uses of the

Digitized by Google

82. For consider a little what each of those five tribes* has been to the spirit of man.[1] First, in their nobleness; the Lilies gave the lily of the Annunciation; the Asphodels, the flower of the Elysian fields; the Irids, the fleur-de-lys of chivalry; and the Amaryllids, Christ's lily of the field: while the rush, trodden always under foot, became the emblem of humility. Then take each of the tribes, and consider the extent of their lower influence. Perdita's "The crown imperial, lilies of all kinds,"[2] are the first tribe; which, giving the type of perfect purity in the Madonna's lily, have, by their lovely form, influenced the entire decorative design of Italian sacred art; while ornament of war was continually enriched by the curves of the triple petals of the Florentine "giglio," and French fleur-de-lys; so that it is impossible to count their influence for good in the Middle Ages, partly as a symbol of womanly character, and partly of the utmost brightness and refinement of chivalry in the city which was the flower of cities.

Afterwards, the group of the turban-lilies, or tulips, did some mischief, (their splendid stains having made them the favourite caprice of florists;) but they may be pardoned all such guilt for the pleasure they have given in cottage gardens, and are yet to give, when lowly life may again be possible among us; and the crimson bars of the tulips in their trim beds, with their likeness in crimson bars of morning above them, and its dew glittering heavy, globed in their glossy cups, may be loved better than the grey nettles of

* Take this rough distinction of the four tribes:—Lilies, superior ovary, white seeds; Asphodels, superior ovary, black seeds; Irids, inferior ovary, style (typically) rising into central crest; Amaryllids, inferior ovary, stamens (typically) joined in central cup. Then the rushes are a dark group, through which they stoop to the grasses.

---

lily in Christian art and Shakespeare's use of the lily are given by Ruskin below. He here refers also to the lotus of Egypt, of which Plutarch says, "They characterise the rising sun as though it sprang every day afresh out of the lotus-plant; but this implies, that to moisture we owe the first kindling of this luminary" (*De Isid.*, 11). For the large place filled by the lotus in Indian mythology and poetry, see C. Coleman's *Mythology of the Hindus*, 1832, pp. 387–388.]

[1] [With this section compare *Val d'Arno*, § 252 and *n.*]

[2] [*Winter's Tale*, iv. 3, 126: quoted also in *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 32.]

Digitized by Google

the ash heap, under grey sky, unveined by vermilion or by gold.

83. The next great group, of the Asphodels, divides itself also into two principal families; one, in which the flowers are like stars, and clustered characteristically in balls, though opening sometimes into looser heads; and the other, in which the flowers are in long bells, opening suddenly at the lips, and clustered in spires on a long stem, or drooping from it, when bent by their weight.

The star-group, of the squills, garlics, and onions, has always caused me great wonder. I cannot understand why its beauty, and serviceableness, should have been associated with the rank scent which has been really among the most powerful means of degrading peasant life, and separating it from that of the higher classes.

The belled group, of the hyacinth and convallaria, is as delicate as the other is coarse: the unspeakable azure light along the ground of the wood hyacinth in English spring; the grape hyacinth, which is in South France, as if a cluster of grapes and a hive of honey had been distilled and compressed together into one small boss of celled and beaded blue; the lilies of the valley everywhere, in each sweet and wild recess of rocky land;—count the influences of these on childish and innocent life; then measure the mythic power of the hyacinth and asphodel as connected with Greek thoughts of immortality;[1] finally take their useful and nourishing power in ancient and modern peasant life, and it will be strange if you do not feel what fixed relation exists between the agency of the creating spirit in these, and in us who live by them.

84. It is impossible to bring into any tenable compass for our present purpose, even hints of the human influence of the two remaining orders of Amaryllids and Irids;—only note this generally, that while these in northern countries share with the Primulas the fields of spring, it seems that

[1] [Compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 26 (Vol. XVI. p. 33).]

Digitized by Google

in Greece, the primulaceæ are not an extended tribe, while the crocus, narcissus, and Amaryllis lutea, the "lily of the field"[1] (I suspect also that the flower whose name we translate "violet" was in truth an Iris[2]) represented to the Greek the first coming of the breath of life on the renewed herbage; and became in his thoughts the true embroidery of the saffron robe[3] of Athena. Later in the year, the dianthus (which, though belonging to an entirely different race of plants, has yet a strange look of having been made out of the grasses by turning the sheath-membrane at the root of their leaves into a flower,) seems to scatter, in multitudinous families, its crimson stars far and wide. But the golden lily and crocus, together with the asphodel, retain always the old Greek's fondest thoughts—they are only "golden" flowers that are to burn on the trees, and float on the streams of paradise.[4]

85. I have but one tribe of plants more to note at our country feast—the savoury herbs; but must go a little out of my way to come at them rightly. All flowers whose petals are fastened together, and most of those whose petals are loose, are best thought of first as a kind of cup or tube opening at the mouth. Sometimes the opening is gradual, as in the convolvulus or campanula; oftener there is a distinct change of direction between the tube and expanding lip, as in the primrose; or even a contraction under the lip, making the tube into a narrow-necked phial or vase, as in the heaths, but the general idea of a tube expanding into a quatrefoil, cinquefoil, or sixfoil, will embrace most of the forms.

86. Now it is easy to conceive that flowers of this kind, growing in close clusters, may, in process of time, have extended their outside petals rather than the interior ones

[1] [Matthew vi. 28.]
[2] [Compare *Laws of Fésole*, ch. vii. § 20 (Vol. XV. p. 426).]
[3] [Compare *ibid.*, ch. vii. § 26 (Vol. XV. p. 427).]
[4] [A reference to the passage in Pindar translated above (§ 50, p. 350), which continues, "golden flowers are glowing, some from the land on trees of splendour, and some the water feedeth, with wreaths whereof they entwine their hands."]

Digitized by Google

(as the outer flowers of the clusters of many umbellifers actually do), and thus, elongated and variously distorted forms have established themselves; then if the stalk is attached to the side instead of the base of the tube, its base becomes a spur, and thus all the grotesque forms of the mints, violets, and larkspurs, gradually might be composed. But, however this may be, there is one great tribe of plants separate from the rest, and of which the influence seems shed upon the rest in different degrees: and these would give the impression, not so much of having been developed by change, as of being stamped with a character of their own, more or less serpentine or dragon-like. And I think you will find it convenient to call these generally, *Draconidæ;* disregarding their present ugly botanical name,[1] which I do not care even to write once—you may take for their principal types the Foxglove, Snapdragon, and Calceolaria; and you will find they all agree in a tendency to decorate themselves by spots, and with bosses or swollen places in their leaves, as if they had been touched by poison. The spot of the Foxglove is especially strange, because it draws the colour out of the tissue all round it, as if it had been stung, and as if the central colour was really an inflamed spot, with paleness round. Then also they carry to its extreme the decoration by bulging or pouting the petal;—often beautifully used by other flowers in a minor degree, like the beating out of bosses in hollow silver, as in the kalmia, beating out apparently in each petal by the stamens instead of a hammer; or the borage, pouting inwards; but the snapdragons and calceolarias carry it to its extreme.

87. Then the spirit of these Draconidæ seems to pass more or less into other flowers, whose forms are properly pure vases; but it affects some of them slightly,—others not at all. It never strongly affects the heaths; never once the roses; but it enters like an evil spirit into the buttercup, and turns it into a larkspur, with a black, spotted,

[1] [*Scrofulariaceæ.*]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Erba della Madonna

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

grotesque centre, and a strange, broken blue, gorgeous and intense, yet impure, glittering on the surface as if it were strewn with broken glass, and stained or darkening irregularly into red. And then at last the serpent charm changes the ranunculus into monkshood; and makes it poisonous. It enters into the forget-me-not, and the star of heavenly turquoise is corrupted into the viper's bugloss, darkened with the same strange red as the larkspur, and fretted into a fringe of thorn; it enters, together with a strange insect-spirit, into the asphodels, and (though with a greater interval between the groups,) they change into spotted orchideæ: it touches the poppy, it becomes a fumaria; the iris, and it pouts into a gladiolus; the lily, and it chequers itself into a snake's-head, and secretes in the deep of its bell drops, not of venom indeed, but honey-dew, as if it were a healing serpent. For there is an Æsculapian as well as an evil serpentry among the Draconidæ, and the fairest of them, the "erba della Madonna" of Venice, (Linaria Cymbalaria,[1]) descends from the ruins it delights in to the herbage at their feet, and touches it; and behold, instantly, a vast group of herbs for healing,—all draconid in form,—spotted, and crested, and from their lip-like corollas named "labiatæ"; full of various balm, and warm strength for healing, yet all of them without splendid honour or perfect beauty, "ground ivies,"[2] richest when crushed under the foot; the best sweetness and gentle brightness of the robes of the field,—thyme, and marjoram, and Euphrasy.

88. And observe, again and again, with respect to all these divisions and powers of plants; it does not matter in the least by what concurrences of circumstance or necessity they may gradually have been developed: the concurrence of circumstance is itself the supreme and inexplicable fact.

[1] [For this plant, the "ivy-leaved toad-flax," see Vol. V. p. 167; Vol. XI. p. 336. Plate XVII. here is from Ruskin's drawing at Oxford, Educational Series, No. 19.]

[2] [The herb ale-hoof (*Nepeta Glechoma*); called "ground ivy" from its creeping stem. Euphrasy is perhaps better known as eyebright.]

Digitized by Google

We always come at last to a formative cause, which directs the circumstance, and mode of meeting it. If you ask an ordinary botanist the reason of the form of a leaf, he will tell you it is a "developed tubercle," and that its ultimate form "is owing to the direction of its vascular threads." But what directs its vascular threads? "They are seeking for something they want," he will probably answer. What made them want that? What made them seek for it thus? Seek for it, in five fibres or in three? Seek for it, in serration, or in sweeping curves? Seek for it, in servile tendrils, or impetuous spray? Seek for it, in woollen wrinkles rough with stings, or in glossy surfaces, green with pure strength, and winterless delight?

89. There is no answer. But the sum of all is, that over the entire surface of the earth and its waters, as influenced by the power of the air under solar light, there is developed a series of changing forms, in clouds, plants, and animals, all of which have reference in their action, or nature, to the human intelligence that perceives them; and on which, in their aspects of horror and beauty, and their qualities of good and evil, there is engraved a series of myths, or words of the forming power, which, according to the true passion and energy of the human race, they have been enabled to read into religion. And this forming power has been by all nations partly confused with the breath or air through which it acts, and partly understood as a creative wisdom, proceeding from the Supreme Deity; but entering into and inspiring all intelligences that work in harmony with Him. And whatever intellectual results may be in modern days obtained by regarding this effluence only as a motion or vibration, every formative human art hitherto, and the best states of human happiness and order, have depended on the apprehension of its mystery (which is certain), and of its personality (which is probable).

90. Of its influence on the formative arts, I have a few words to say separately: my present business is only to interpret, as we are now sufficiently enabled to do, the

Digitized by Google

external symbols of the myth under which it was represented by the Greeks as a goddess of counsel, taken first into the breast of their Supreme Deity, then created out of his thoughts, and abiding closely beside him; always sharing and consummating his power.

91. And in doing this we have first to note the meaning of the principal epithet applied to Athena, "Glaukopis,"[1] "with eyes full of light," the first syllable being connected, by its root, with words signifying sight, not with words signifying colour. As far as I can trace the colour perception of the Greeks, I find it all founded primarily on the degree of connection between colour and light;[2] the most important fact to them in the colour of red being its connection with fire and sunshine; so that "purple" is, in its original sense, "fire-colour,"[3] and the scarlet, or orange, of dawn, more than any other, fire-colour. I was long puzzled by Homer's calling the sea purple; and misled into thinking he meant the colour of cloud shadows on green sea;[4] whereas he really means the gleaming blaze of the waves under wide light. Aristotle's idea (partly true) is that light, subdued by blackness, becomes red;[5] and blackness heated or lighted, also becomes red. Thus, a colour may be called purple because it is light subdued (and so death is called "purple" or "shadowy" death); or else it may be called purple as being shade kindled with fire, and thus said of the lighted sea; or even of the sun itself, when it is thought of as a red luminary opposed to the whiteness of the moon: "purpureos inter soles, et candida lunæ sidera";[6] or of golden hair: "pro purpureo pœnam solvens scelerata capillo";[7] while both ideas are modified

[1] [Compare § 15 (above, p. 306).]

[2] [For another passage dealing with "the strong impressions of the power of light" in the Greeks, see *Lectures on Art*, §§ 151 *seq.*]

[3] [See above, pp. 313, 330.]

[4] [See the "Addresses on Decorative Colour" (1854), § 38, where this explanation was given (Vol. XII. p. 505).]

[5] [*De Coloribus*, ch. iii.; compare Vol. VII. p. 159.]

[6] [Virgil: *Ciris*, 37.]

[7] [Ruskin quotes from memory, and combines *Georgics*, i. 405 ("et pro purpureo pœnas dat Scylla capillo") with *Æneid*, ii. 576 ("sceleratas sumere pœnas").]

Digitized by Google

by the influence of an earlier form of the word, which has nothing to do with fire at all, but only with mixing or staining;[1] and then, to make the whole group of thoughts inextricably complex, yet rich and subtle in proportion to their intricacy, the various rose and crimson colours of the murex-dye,—the crimson and purple of the poppy, and fruit of the palm—and the association of all these with the hue of blood;—partly direct, partly through a confusion between the word signifying "slaughter" and "palm-fruit colour,"[2] mingle themselves in, and renew the whole nature of the old word; so that, in later literature, it means a different colour, or emotion of colour, in almost every place where it occurs: and casts around for ever the reflection of all that has been dipped in its dyes.

92. So that the word is really a liquid prism, and stream of opal. And then, last of all, to keep the whole history of it in the fantastic course of a dream, warped here and there into wild grotesque, we moderns, who have preferred to rule over coal-mines instead of the sea (and so have turned the everlasting lamp of Athena into a Davy's safety-lamp in the hand of Britannia, and Athenian heavenly lightning into British subterranean "damp"), have actually got our purple out of coal instead of the sea! And thus, grotesquely, we have had enforced on us the doubt that held the old word between blackness and fire, and have completed the shadow, and the fear of it, by giving it a name from battle, "Magenta."[3]

93. There is precisely a similar confusion between light and colour in the word used for the blue of the eyes of Athena—a noble confusion, however, brought about by the intensity of the Greek sense that the heaven is light, more than that it is blue. I was not thinking of this when I

[1] [By "an earlier form of the word," Ruskin seems to mean that originally the word πορφύρω was a reduplicated form of φύρω (to mix): see Liddell and Scott.]

[2] [φονή and φοινίκεος, purple (from φόνιξ): see Liddell and Scott under the latter word. Compare also *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 7, where Ruskin connects the word further with "phœnix or flamingo colour."]

[3] [The aniline dye, first so called, was discovered shortly after the date of the battle (1859).]

Digitized by Google

wrote, in speaking of pictorial chiaroscuro, "The sky is not blue colour merely: it is blue fire, and cannot be painted" (*Mod. P.*, iv. p. 86[1]); but it was this that the Greeks chiefly felt of it, and so "Glaukopis" chiefly means grey-eyed: grey standing for a pale or luminous blue; but it only means "owl-eyed" in thought of the roundness and expansion, not from the colour; this breadth and brightness being, again, in their moral sense, typical of the breadth, intensity, and singleness of the sight in prudence ("if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light"[2]). Then the actual power of the bird to see in twilight enters into the type, and perhaps its general fineness of sense. "Before the human form was adopted, her (Athena's) proper symbol was the owl, a bird which seems to surpass all other creatures in acuteness of organic perception, its eye being calculated to observe objects which to all others are enveloped in darkness, its ear to hear sounds distinctly, and its nostrils to discriminate effluvia with such nicety that it has been deemed prophetic, from discovering the putridity of death even in the first stages of disease."*

I cannot find anywhere an account of the first known occurrence of the type; but, in the early ones on Attic coins, the wide round eyes are clearly the principal things to be made manifest.

94. There is yet, however, another colour of great importance in the conception of Athena—the dark blue of her ægis. Just as the blue or grey of her eyes was conceived as more light than colour, so her ægis was dark blue, because the Greeks thought of this tint more as shade than colour, and, while they used various materials in ornamentation, lapis-lazuli, carbonate of copper, or perhaps, smalt, with real enjoyment of the blue tint, it was yet in

* Payne Knight, in his *Inquiry into the Symbolical Language of Ancient Art* [1818], not trustworthy, being little more than a mass of conjectural memoranda, but the heap is suggestive, if well sifted.

[1] [Part v. ch. iii. § 3; see now Vol. VI. p. 51.]
[2] [Matthew vi. 22.]

Digitized by Google

their minds as distinctly representative of darkness as scarlet was of light, and, therefore, anything dark,* but especially the colour of heavy thundercloud, was described by the same term. The physical power of this darkness of the ægis, fringed with lightning, is given quite simply when Jupiter himself uses it to overshadow Ida and the Plain of Troy, and withdraws it at the prayer of Ajax for light;[1] and again when he grants it to be worn for a time by Apollo, who is hidden by its cloud when he strikes down Patroclus:[2] but its spiritual power is chiefly expressed by a word signifying deeper shadow;—the gloom of Erebus, or of our evening, which, when spoken of the ægis, signifies not merely the indignation of Athena, but the entire hiding or withdrawal of her help, and beyond even this, her deadliest of all hostility—the darkness by which she herself deceives and beguiles to final ruin those to whom she is

* In the breastplate and shield of Atrides the serpents and bosses are all of this dark colour, yet the serpents are said to be like rainbows;[3] but through all this splendour and opposition of hue, I feel distinctly that the literal "splendour," with its relative shade, are prevalent in the conception; and that there is always a tendency to look through the hue to its cause. And in this feeling about colour the Greeks are separated from the Eastern nations, and from the best designers of Christian times. I cannot find that they take pleasure in colour for its own sake; it may be in something more than colour, or better; but it is not in the hue itself. When Homer describes cloud breaking from a mountain summit the crags became visible in light, not in colour; he feels only their flashing out in bright edges and trenchant shadows: above, the "infinite," "unspeakable" æther is torn open—but not the *blue* of it.[4] He has scarcely any abstract pleasure in blue, or green, or gold; but only in their shade or flame.

I have yet to trace the causes of this (which will be a long task, belonging to art questions, not to mythological ones);[5] but it is, I believe, much connected with the brooding of the shadow of death over the Greeks, without any clear hope of immortality. The restriction of the

---

[1] [*Iliad*, xvii. 593, 594, 626 *seq.*]
[2] [*Ibid.*, xvi. 777 *seq.*]
[3] [*Ibid.*, xi. 24 *seq.*]
[4] [*Ibid.*, xvi. 297–300: "As when from the high crest of a great hill, Zeus, the gatherer of the lightning, has stirred a dense cloud, and all the peaks, and sharp promontories, and glades shine forth, and from heaven the infinite air breaks open."]
[5] [See *Lectures on Art*, Lectures vi. and vii., and compare *Art of England*, § 52.]

Digitized by Google

wholly adverse; this contradiction of her own glory being the uttermost judgment upon human falsehood. Thus it is she who provokes Pandarus to the treachery which purposed to fulfil the rape of Helen by the murder of her husband in time of truce; and *then* the Greek King, holding his wounded brother's hand, prophesies against Troy the darkness of the ægis which shall be over all, and for ever.*

95. This, then, finally, was the perfect colour-conception of Athena;—the flesh, snow-white, (the hands, feet, and face of marble, even when the statue was hewn roughly in wood); the eyes of keen pale blue, often in statues represented by jewels; the long robe to the feet, crocus-coloured; and the ægis thrown over it of thunderous purple; the helmet golden, (*Il.*, v. 144,) and I suppose its crest also, as that of Achilles.[1]

If you think carefully of the meaning and character

colour on their vases to dim red (or yellow) with black and white, is greatly connected with their sepulchral use, and with all the melancholy of Greek tragic thought; and in this gloom the failure of colour-perception is partly noble, partly base: noble, in its earnestness, which raises the design of Greek vases as far above the designing of mere colourist nations like the Chinese, as men's thoughts are above children's; and yet it is partly base and earthly; and inherently defective in one human faculty: and I believe it was one cause of the perishing of their art so swiftly, for indeed there is no decline so sudden, or down to such utter loss and ludicrous depravity, as the fall of Greek design on its vases from the fifth to the third century, B.C. On the other hand, the pure colour-gift, when employed for pleasure only, degrades in another direction; so that among the Indians, Chinese, and Japanese,[2] all intellectual progress in art has been for ages rendered impossible by the prevalence of that faculty: and yet it is, as I have said again and again,[3] the spiritual power of art; and its true brightness is the essential characteristic of all healthy schools.

* ἐρεμνὴν Αἰγίδα πᾶσι.—*Il.*, iv. 166.

---

[1] [*Iliad*, xviii. 611.]

[2] [For Ruskin's views on Japanese art, see *Time and Tide*, § 26 (Vol. XVII. p. 340); and for Indian art, *Two Paths*, § 3 (Vol. XVI. p. 261). In *Lectures on Art*, § 158, referring to the present page, Ruskin explains that the Indian and Chinese schools of art were "content to obtain beautiful harmonies of colour without any representation of light."]

[3] [See, for instance, *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 194); and vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 417).]

Digitized by Google

which is now enough illustrated for you in each of these colours; and remember that the crocus-colour and the purple were both of them developments, in opposite directions, of the great central idea of fire-colour, or scarlet, you will see that this form of the creative spirit of the earth is conceived as robed in the blue, and purple, and scarlet, the white, and the gold, which have been recognized for the sacred chord of colours, from the day when the cloud descended on a Rock more mighty than Ida.[1]

96. I have spoken throughout, hitherto, of the conception of Athena, as it is traceable in the Greek mind; not as it was rendered by Greek art. It is matter of extreme difficulty, requiring a sympathy at once affectionate and cautious, and a knowledge reaching the earliest springs of the religion of many lands, to discern through the imperfection, and alas! more dimly yet, through the triumphs, of formative art, what kind of thoughts they were that appointed for it the tasks of its childhood, and watched by the awakening of its strength.[2]

The religious passion is nearly always vividest when the art is weakest; and the technical skill reaches its deliberate splendour only when the ecstasy which gave it birth has passed away for ever. It is as vain an attempt to reason out the visionary power or guiding influence of Athena in the Greek heart, from anything we now read, or possess, of the work of Phidias, as it would be for the disciples of some new religion to infer the spirit of Christianity from Titian's "Assumption." The effective vitality of the religious conception can be traced only through the efforts of trembling hands, and strange pleasures of untaught eyes; and the beauty of the dream can no more be found in the

[1] [See Exodus xxiv. 18, xxv. 1–4: "And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount. . . . And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering. . . . And blue, and purple, and scarlet." Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 197).]

[2] [See the *Art of England*, § 43, for a reference to "the erroneous idea" that the nature of myths may be "conclusively ascertained by the types which early art presents of them."]

Digitized by Google

first symbols by which it is expressed, than a child's idea of fairyland can be gathered from its pencil scrawl, or a girl's love for her broken doll explained by the defaced features. On the other hand, the Athena of Phidias was, in very fact, not so much the deity, as the darling of the Athenian people. Her magnificence represented their pride and fondness, more than their piety; and the great artist, in lavishing upon her dignities which might be ended abruptly by the pillage they provoked, resigned, apparently without regret, the awe of her ancient memory; and, (with only the careless remonstrance of a workman too strong to be proud,) even the perfectness of his own art. Rejoicing in the protection of their goddess, and in their own hour of glory, the people of Athena robed her, at their will, with the preciousness of ivory and gems; forgot or denied the darkness of the breastplate of judgment, and vainly bade its unappeasable serpents relax their coils in gold.

97. It will take me many a day yet—if days, many or few, be given me—to disentangle in anywise the proud and practised disguises of religious creeds from the instinctive arts which, grotesquely and indecorously, yet with sincerity, strove to embody them, or to relate. But I think the reader, by help even of the imperfect indications already given to him, will be able to follow, with a continually increasing security, the vestiges of the Myth of Athena; and to reanimate its almost evanescent shade, by connecting it with the now recognized facts of existent nature, which it, more or less dimly, reflected and foretold. I gather these facts together in brief sum.

98. The deep of air that surrounds the earth enters into union with the earth at its surface, and with its waters; so as to be the apparent cause of their ascending into life. First, it warms them, and shades, at once, staying the heat of the sun's rays in its own body, but warding their force with its clouds. It warms and cools at once, with traffic of balm and frost; so that the white wreaths are withdrawn from the field of the Swiss peasant

Digitized by Google

by the glow of Libyan rock. It gives its own strength to the sea; forms and fills every cell of its foam; sustains the precipices, and designs the valleys of its waves; gives the gleam to their moving under the night, and the white fire to their plains under sunrise; lifts their voices along the rocks, bears above them the spray of birds, pencils through them the dimpling of unfooted sands. It gathers out of them a portion in the hollow of its hand: dyes, with that, the hills into dark blue, and their glaciers with dying rose; inlays with that, for sapphire, the dome in which it has to set the cloud; shapes out of that the heavenly flocks: divides them, numbers, cherishes, bears them on its bosom, calls them to their journeys, waits by their rest; feeds from them the brooks that cease not, and strews with them the dews that cease. It spins and weaves their fleece into wild tapestry, rends it, and renews; and flits and flames, and whispers, among the golden threads, thrilling them with a plectrum of strange fire that traverses them to and fro, and is enclosed in them like life.

It enters into the surface of the earth, subdues it, and falls together with it into fruitful dust, from which can be moulded flesh; it joins itself, in dew, to the substance of adamant; and becomes the green leaf out of the dry ground; it enters into the separated shapes of the earth it has tempered, commands the ebb and flow of the current of their life, fills their limbs with its own lightness, measures their existence by its indwelling pulse, moulds upon their lips the words by which one soul can be known to another; is to them the hearing of the ear, and the beating of the heart; and, passing away, leaves them to the peace that hears and moves no more.

99. This was the Athena of the greatest people of the days of old. And opposite to the temple of this Spirit of the breath, and life-blood, of man and of beast, stood, on the Mount of Justice, and near the chasm which was haunted by the goddess-Avengers, an altar to a God unknown;—proclaimed at last to them, as one who, indeed,

Digitized by Google

gave to all men, life, and breath, and all things; and rain from heaven, filling their hearts with food and gladness;—a God who had made of one blood all nations of men who dwell on the face of all the earth, and had determined the times of their fate, and the bounds of their habitation.[1]

100. We ourselves, fretted here in our narrow days, know less, perhaps, in very deed, than they, what manner of spirit we are of, or what manner of spirit we ignorantly worship.[2] Have we, indeed, desired the Desire of all nations? and will the Master whom we meant to seek, and the Messenger in whom we thought we delighted, confirm, when He comes to His temple,—or not find in its midst,—the tables heavy with gold for bread, and the seats that are bought with the price of the dove? Or is our own land also to be left by its angered Spirit;—left among those, where sunshine vainly sweet, and passionate folly of storm, waste themselves in the silent places of knowledge that has passed away, and of tongues that have ceased?

This only we may discern assuredly: this, every true light of science, every mercifully-granted power, every wisely-restricted thought, teach us more clearly day by day, that in the heavens above, and the earth beneath, there is one continual and omnipotent presence of help, and of peace, for all men who know that they Live, and remember that they Die.

[1] [The reference is to the preaching of St. Paul on the Areopagus at Athens, opposite to the Acropolis, and close to the cave of the Eumenides; where stood "an altar with this inscription, To the Unknown God" (Acts xvii. 19, 23, 25, 26, xiv. 17).]

[2] [For the Bible references here, see Acts xvii. 23; Haggai ii. 7; Malachi iii. 1; Matthew xxi. 12.]

Digitized by Google

III

ATHENA ERGANE*

(*Athena in the Heart*)

Various Notes relating to the Conception of Athena as the Directress of the Imagination and Will

101. I HAVE now only a few words to say, bearing on what seems to me present need, respecting the third function of Athena, conceived as the directress of human passion, resolution, and labour.

Few words, for I am not yet prepared to give accurate distinction between the intellectual rule of Athena and that of the Muses: but, broadly, the Muses, with their king, preside over meditative, historical, and poetic arts, whose end is the discovery of light or truth, and the creation of beauty: but Athena rules over moral passion, and practically useful art. She does not make men learned, but prudent and subtle: she does not teach them to make their work beautiful, but to make it right.[1]

In different places of my writings, and through many years of endeavour to define the laws of art, I have insisted on this rightness in work, and on its connection with virtue of character, in so many partial ways, that the impression left on the reader's mind—if, indeed, it was ever impressed

* "Athena the worker, or having rule over work." The name was first given to her by the Athenians.[2]

---

[1] [See § 169, below, p. 414.]

[2] [Pausanias, i. 24, 3: "I observed before that the zeal of the Athenians in matters of religion exceeds that of all other peoples. Thus they were the first to give Athena the surname of the Worker," etc.]

Digitized by Google

at all—has been confused and uncertain. In beginning the series of my corrected works,[1] I wish this principle (in my own mind the foundation of every other) to be made plain, if nothing else is: and will try, therefore, to make it so, as far as, by any effort, I can put it into unmistakable words. And, first, here is a very simple statement of it, given lately in a lecture on the Architecture of the Valley of the Somme, which will be better read in this place than in its incidental connection with my account of the porches of Abbeville.[2]

102. I had used, in a preceding part of the lecture, the expression, "by what faults" this Gothic architecture fell. We continually speak thus of works of art. We talk of their faults and merits, as of virtues and vices. What do we mean by talking of the faults of a picture, or the merits of a piece of stone?

The faults of a work of art are the faults of its workman, and its virtues his virtues.

Great art is the expression of the mind of a great man, and mean art, that of the want of mind of a weak man. A foolish person builds foolishly, and a wise one, sensibly; a virtuous one, beautifully; and a vicious one, basely. If stone work is well put together, it means that a thoughtful man planned it, and a careful man cut it, and an honest man cemented it. If it has too much ornament, it means that its carver was too greedy of pleasure; if too little, that he was rude, or insensitive, or stupid, and the like. So that when once you have learned how to spell these most precious of all legends,—pictures and buildings,—you may read the characters of men, and of nations, in their art, as in a mirror;—nay, as in a microscope, and magnified a

[1] [*The Queen of the Air* was intended, it will thus be seen, to be the first volume in a new series of the author's works. His appointment shortly afterwards to the Slade Professorship at Oxford interfered with the plan; which, however, was resumed in 1871, when the "Works" Series, headed by *Sesame and Lilies*, began to appear: see Vol. XVIII. pp. 9, 31.]

[2] [See § 7 of the lecture; above, p. 248. The lecture read: "And, first, I have just used the expression—by what faults it fell. We continually speak," etc. The passage from the lecture ends with the end of § 105 here.]

Digitized by Google

hundredfold; for the character becomes passionate in the art, and intensifies itself in all its noblest or meanest delights. Nay, not only as in a microscope, but as under a scalpel, and in dissection; for a man may hide himself from you, or misrepresent himself to you, every other way; but he cannot in his work: there, be sure, you have him to the inmost. All that he likes, all that he sees,—all that he can do,—his imagination, his affections, his perseverance, his impatience, his clumsiness, cleverness, everything is there. If the work is a cobweb, you know it was made by a spider; if a honeycomb, by a bee; a worm-cast is thrown up by a worm, and a nest wreathed by a bird; and a house built by a man, worthily, if he is worthy, and ignobly, if he is ignoble.

And always, from the least to the greatest, as the made thing is good or bad, so is the maker of it.

103. You all use this faculty of judgment more or less, whether you theoretically admit the principle or not. Take that floral gable;* you don't suppose the man who built Stonehenge could have built that, or that the man who built that, *would* have built Stonehenge? Do you think an old Roman would have liked such a piece of filigree work? or that Michael Angelo would have spent his time in twisting these stems of roses in and out? Or, of modern handicraftsmen, do you think a burglar, or a brute, or a pickpocket could have carved it? Could Bill Sykes have done it? or the Dodger, dexterous with finger and tool? You will find in the end, that *no man could have done it but exactly the man who did it;* and by looking close at it, you may, if you know your letters, read precisely the manner of man he was.

* The elaborate pediment above the central porch at the west end of Rouen Cathedral, pierced into a transparent web of tracery, and enriched with a border of "twisted eglantine."[1]

[1] [*L'Allegro*, 48. A drawing of the west front of Rouen was No. 49 in the Catalogue of examples illustrating the Abbeville lecture: see above, p. 277.]

Digitized by Google

104. Now I must insist on this matter, for a grave reason. Of all facts concerning art, this is the one most necessary to be known, that, while manufacture is the work of hands only, art is the work of the whole spirit of man;[1] and as that spirit is, so is the deed of it: and by whatever power of vice or virtue any art is produced, the same vice or virtue it reproduces and teaches. That which is born of evil begets evil; and that which is born of valour and honour, teaches valour and honour. All art is either infection or education. It *must* be one or other of these.

105. This, I repeat, of all truths respecting art, is the one of which understanding is the most precious, and denial the most deadly. And I assert it the more, because it has of late been repeatedly, expressly, and with contumely denied; and that by high authority:[2] and I hold it one of the most sorrowful facts connected with the decline of the arts among us, that English gentlemen, of high standing as scholars and artists, should have been blinded into the acceptance, and betrayed into the assertion of a fallacy which only authority such as theirs could have rendered for an instant credible. For the contrary of it is written in the history of all great nations; it is the one sentence always inscribed on the steps of their thrones; the one concordant voice in which they speak to us out of their dust.

All such nations first manifest themselves as a pure and beautiful animal race, with intense energy and imagination. They live lives of hardship by choice, and by grand instinct of manly discipline: they become fierce and irresistible soldiers; the nation is always its own army, and their king, or chief head of government, is always their first soldier. Pharaoh, or David, or Leonidas, or Valerius, or Barbarossa, or Cœur de Lion, or S. Louis, or Dandolo,

[1] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 52 (Vol. XVI. p. 294); and below, p. 463.]
[2] [See, for instance, the discussion at the Royal Institute of British Architects; above, p. 40.]

Digitized by Google

or Frederick the Great:[1]—Egyptian, Jew, Greek, Roman, German, English, French, Venetian,—that is inviolable law for them all; their king must be their first soldier,[2] or they cannot be in progressive power. Then, after their great military period, comes the domestic period;[3] in which, without betraying the discipline of war, they add to their great soldiership the delights and possessions of a delicate and tender home-life: and then, for all nations, is the time of their perfect art, which is the fruit, the evidence, the reward of their national ideal of character, developed by the finished care of the occupations of peace. That is the history of all true art that ever was, or can be: palpably the history of it,—unmistakably,—written on the forehead of it in letters of light,—in tongues of fire, by which the seal of virtue is branded as deep as ever iron burnt into a convict's flesh the seal of crime. But always, hitherto, after the great period, has followed the day of luxury, and pursuit of the arts for pleasure only. And all has so ended.

106. Thus far of Abbeville building. Now I have here asserted two things,—first, the foundation of art in moral character; next, the foundation of moral character in war. I must make both these assertions clearer, and prove them.

First, of the foundation of art in moral character.[4] Of course art-gift and amiability of disposition are two different things; a good man is not necessarily a painter, nor does an eye for colour necessarily imply an honest mind. But great art implies the union of both powers: it is the expression, by an art-gift, of a pure soul. If the gift is not

[1] [For other references to these types of the hero as king or chieftain, see, for Leonidas, Vol. VII. p. 231 and Vol. IX. p. 446; for Valerius, above, p. 102; for Barbarossa, *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, §§ 84 *seq.*; for Cœur de Lion, Vol. XI. p. 79; for St. Louis, Vol. V. p. 416 and Vol. XII. p. 138; for Dandolo, Vol. IX. p. 20 *n.*, and Vol. XVIII. p. 463; and for Frederick the Great, Vol. XVIII. p. 516.]

[2] [Compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, §§ 91, 163 (Vol. XVIII. pp. 463, 516).]

[3] [Compare *ibid.*, § 91 (Vol. XVIII. p. 462).]

[4] [On this point compare (among other passages) *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 210–211); vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 65–66); *Two Paths*, § 66 (Vol. XVI. p. 310); *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 54 (Vol. XVIII. p. 434); and *Lectures on Art*, §§ 9, 27, 33, 66–68, 71, 77, 95. And in this volume see the lecture on "The Relation of National Ethics to National Arts."]

Digitized by Google

there, we can have no art at all; and if the soul—and a right soul too—is not there, the art is bad, however dexterous.

107. But also, remember, that the art-gift itself is only the result of the moral character of generations.[1] A bad woman may have a sweet voice; but that sweetness of voice comes of the past morality of her race. That she can sing with it at all, she owes to the determination of laws of music by the morality of the past. Every act, every impulse, of virtue and vice, affects in any creature, face, voice, nervous power, and vigour and harmony of invention, at once. Perseverance in rightness of human conduct, renders, after a certain number of generations, human art possible; every sin clouds it, be it ever so little a one; and persistent vicious living and following of pleasure render, after a certain number of generations, all art impossible. Men are deceived by the long-suffering of the laws of nature; and mistake, in a nation, the reward of the virtue of its sires for the issue of its own sins. The time of their visitation will come, and that inevitably; for, it is always true, that if the fathers have eaten sour grapes, the children's teeth are set on edge.[2] And for the individual, as soon as you have learned to read, you may, as I have said, know him to the heart's core, through his art. Let his art-gift be never so great, and cultivated to the height by the schools of a great race of men; and it is still but a tapestry thrown over his own being and inner soul; and the bearing of it will show, infallibly, whether it hangs on a man, or on a skeleton. If you are dim-eyed, you may not see the difference in the fall of the folds at first, but learn how to look, and the folds themselves will become transparent, and you shall see through them the death's shape, or the divine one, making the tissue above it as a cloud of light, or as a winding-sheet.

[1] [This also is a point constantly enforced by Ruskin: see, for instance, "The Study of Architecture," § 3 (above, p. 23); and the Preface to *St. Mark's Rest.*]
[2] [Jeremiah xxxi. 29.]

Digitized by Google

108. Then farther, observe, I have said[1] (and you will find it true, and that to the uttermost) that, as all lovely art is rooted in virtue, so it bears fruit of virtue, and is didactic in its own nature. It is often didactic also in actually expressed thought, as Giotto's, Michael Angelo's, Dürer's, and hundreds more; but that is not its special function,—it is didactic chiefly by being beautiful; but beautiful with haunting thought, no less than with form, and full of myths that can be read only with the heart.

For instance, at this moment there is open beside me as I write, a page of Persian manuscript, wrought with wreathed azure and gold, and soft green, and violet, and ruby and scarlet, into one field of pure resplendence.[2] It is wrought to delight the eyes only; and it does delight them; and the man who did it assuredly had eyes in his head; but not much more. It is not didactic art, but its author was happy: and it will do the good, and the harm, that mere pleasure can do. But, opposite me,[3] is an early Turner drawing of the lake of Geneva, taken about two miles from Geneva, on the Lausanne road, with Mont Blanc in the distance. The old city is seen lying beyond the waveless waters, veiled with a sweet misty veil of Athena's weaving: a faint light of morning, peaceful exceedingly, and almost colourless, shed from behind the Voirons, increases into soft amber along the slope of the Salève, and is just seen, and no more, on the fair warm fields of its summit, between the folds of a white cloud that rests upon the grass, but rises, high and towerlike, into the zenith of dawn above.

109. There is not as much colour in that low amber light upon the hill-side as there is in the palest dead leaf. The lake is not blue, but grey in mist, passing into deep shadow beneath the Voirons' pines; a few dark clusters of

[1] [See above, § 17, p. 307.]
[2] [Now in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford.]
[3] [In his study at Denmark Hill: see "Instructions in Use of Rudimentary Series," § 2 (Vol. XX.), where he again refers to the drawing, for which see Vol. XIII. p. 458.]

Digitized by Google

leaves, a single white flower—scarcely seen—are all the gladness given to the rocks of the shore. One of the ruby spots of the eastern manuscript would give colour enough for all the red that is in Turner's entire drawing. For the mere pleasure of the eye, there is not so much in all those lines of his, throughout the entire landscape, as in half an inch square of the Persian's page. What made him take pleasure in the low colour that is only like the brown of a dead leaf? in the cold grey of dawn—in the one white flower among the rocks—in these—and no more than these?

110. He took pleasure in them because he had been bred among English fields and hills; because the gentleness of a great race was in his heart, and its power of thought in his brain; because he knew the stories of the Alps, and of the cities at their feet; because he had read the Homeric legends of the clouds, and beheld the gods of dawn, and the givers of dew to the fields; because he knew the faces of the crags, and the imagery of the passionate mountains, as a man knows the face of his friend; because he had in him the wonder and sorrow concerning life and death, which are the inheritance of the Gothic soul from the days of its first sea kings; and also the compassion and the joy that are woven into the innermost fabric of every great imaginative spirit, born now in countries that have lived by the Christian faith with any courage or truth. And the picture contains also, for us, just this which its maker had in him to give; and can convey it to us, just so far as we are of the temper in which it must be received. It is didactic, if we are worthy to be taught, no otherwise. The pure heart, it will make more pure; the thoughtful, more thoughtful. It has in it no words for the reckless or the base.

111. As I myself look at it, there is no fault nor folly of my life,—and both have been many and great,—that does not rise up against me, and take away my joy, and shorten my power of possession, of sight, of understanding.

Digitized by Google

And every past effort of my life, every gleam of rightness or good in it, is with me now, to help me in my grasp of this art, and its vision. So far as I can rejoice in, or interpret either, my power is owing to what of right there is in me. I dare to say it, that, because through all my life I have desired good, and not evil; because I have been kind to many; have wished to be kind to all; have wilfully injured none; and because I have loved much, and not selfishly;[1]—therefore, the morning light is yet visible to me on those hills, and you, who read, may trust my thought and word in such work as I have to do for you; and you will be glad afterwards that you have trusted them.

112. Yet remember,—I repeat it again and yet again,—that I may for once, if possible, make this thing assuredly clear:—the inherited art-gift must be there, as well as the life in some poor measure, or rescued fragment, right. This art-gift of mine could not have been won by any work, or by any conduct; it belongs to me by birthright, and came by Athena's will, from the air of English country villages, and Scottish hills. I will risk whatever charge of folly may come on me, for printing one of my many childish rhymes, written on a frosty day in Glen Farg, just north of Loch Leven.[2] It bears date 1st January, 1828. I was born on the 8th of February, 1819; and all that I ever could be, and all that I cannot be, the weak little rhyme already shows.

"Papa, how pretty those icicles are,
That are seen so near,—that are seen so far;
—Those dropping waters that come from the rocks
And many a hole, like the haunt of a fox.
That silvery stream that runs babbling along,
Making a murmuring, dancing song.
Those trees that stand waving upon the rock's side,
And men, that, like spectres, among them glide.

[1] [Compare Ruskin's reply to a charge of "sentimentality" in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 41.]
[2] [See Vol. II. p. 262.]

Digitized by Google

And waterfalls that are heard from far,
And come in sight when very near.
And the water-wheel that turns slowly round,
Grinding the corn that—requires to be ground,—

(Political Economy of the future!)

——And mountains at a distance seen,
And rivers winding through the plain.
And quarries with their craggy stones,
And the wind among them moans."

So foretelling Stones of Venice, and this essay on Athena.

Enough now concerning myself.

113. Of Turner's life, and of its good and evil, both great, but the good immeasurably the greater, his work is in all things a perfect and transparent evidence. His biography is simply,—"He did this, nor will ever another do its like again." Yet read what I have said of him, as compared with the great Italians, in the passages taken from the *Cestus of Aglaia*, farther on, § 158.[1]

114. This, then, is the nature of the connection of morals with art. Now, secondly, I have asserted the foundation of both these, at least, hitherto, in war. The reason of this too manifest fact is, that, until now, it has been impossible for any nation, except a warrior one, to fix its mind wholly on its men, instead of on their possessions. Every great soldier nation thinks, necessarily, first of multiplying its bodies and souls of men, in good temper and strict discipline. As long as this is its political aim, it does not matter what it temporarily suffers, or loses, either in numbers or in wealth; its morality and its arts, (if it have national art-gift,) advance together; but so soon as it ceases to be a warrior nation, it thinks of its possessions instead of its men; and then the moral and poetic powers vanish together.

115. It is thus, however, absolutely necessary to the virtue of war that it should be waged by personal strength,

[1] [Now to be read in their original place; see above, pp. 131, 132.]

Digitized by Google

not by money or machinery.[1] A nation that fights with a mercenary force, or with torpedoes instead of its own arms, is dying. Not but that there is more true courage in modern than even in ancient war; but this is, first, because all the remaining life of European nations is with a morbid intensity thrown into their soldiers; and, secondly, because their present heroism is the culmination of centuries of inbred and traditional valour, which Athena taught them by forcing them to govern the foam of the sea-wave and of the horse,—not the steam of kettles.

116. And farther, note this, which is vital to us in the present crisis: If war is to be made by money and machinery, the nation which is the largest and most covetous multitude will win. You may be as scientific as you choose; the mob that can pay more for sulphuric acid and gunpowder will at last poison its bullets, throw acid in your faces, and make an end of you;—of itself, also, in good time, but of you first. And to the English people the choice of its fate is very near now.[2] It may spasmodically defend its property with iron walls a fathom thick, a few years longer—a very few. No walls will defend either it, or its havings, against the multitude that is breeding and spreading, faster than the clouds, over the habitable earth. We shall be allowed to live by small pedlar's business, and ironmongery—since we have chosen those for our line of life—as long as we are found useful black servants to the Americans; and are content to dig coals and sit in the cinders; and have still coals to dig,—they once exhausted, or got cheaper elsewhere, we shall be abolished. But if we think more wisely, while there is yet time, and set our minds again on multiplying Englishmen, and not on cheapening English wares; if we resolve to submit to wholesome laws of labour and economy, and, setting our political squabbles aside, try how many strong creatures,

[1] [On this point compare *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 103 (Vol. XVIII. p. 472).]
[2] [Compare Vol. XVII. p. 110 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

friendly and faithful to each other, we can crowd into every spot of English dominion, neither poison nor iron will prevail against us; nor traffic—nor hatred: the noble nation will yet, by the grace of Heaven, rule over the ignoble, and force of heart hold its own against fire-balls.

117. But there is yet a farther reason for the dependence of the arts on war. The vice and injustice of the world are constantly springing anew, and are only to be subdued by battle; the keepers of order and law must always be soldiers. And now, going back to the myth of Athena, we see that though she is first a warrior maid, she detests war for its own sake; she arms Achilles and Ulysses in just quarrels, but she *dis*arms Ares. She contends, herself, continually against disorder and convulsion in the Earth giants; she stands by Hercules' side in victory over all monstrous evil: in justice only she judges and makes war.[1] But in this war of hers she is wholly implacable. She has little notion of converting criminals. There is no faculty of mercy in her when she has been resisted. Her word is only, "I will mock when your fear cometh."[2] Note the words that follow: "when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind;" for her wrath is of irresistible tempest: once roused, it is blind and deaf,—rabies—madness of anger—darkness of the Dies Iræ.

And that is, indeed, the sorrowfullest fact we have to know about our own several lives. Wisdom never forgives. Whatever resistance we have offered to her law, she avenges for ever;—the lost hour can never be redeemed, and the accomplished wrong never atoned for. The best that can be done afterwards, but for that, had been better; —the falsest of all the cries of peace, where there is no peace, is that of the pardon of sin, as the mob expect it. Wisdom can "put away" sin,[3] but she cannot pardon it;

[1] [Revelation xix. 11: compare Vol. XVIII. p. 493.]
[2] [Proverbs i. 26, 27.]
[3] [Hebrews ix. 26.]

Digitized by Google

and she is apt, in her haste, to put away the sinner as well, when the black ægis is on her breast.

118. And this is also a fact we have to know about our national life, that it is ended as soon as it has lost the power of noble Anger.[1] When it paints over, and apologizes for its pitiful criminalities; and endures its false weights, and its adulterated food;[2] dares not decide practically between good and evil, and can neither honour the one, nor smite the other, but sneers at the good, as if it were hidden evil, and consoles the evil with pious sympathy, and conserves it in the sugar of its leaden heart,—the end is come.

119. The first sign, then, of Athena's presence with any people, is that they become warriors, and that the chief thought of every man of them is to stand rightly in his rank, and not fail from his brother's side in battle. Wealth, and pleasure, and even love, are all, under Athena's orders, sacrificed to this duty of standing fast in the rank of war.

But farther: Athena presided over industry, as well as battle; typically, over women's industry; that brings comfort with pleasantness.[3] Her word to us all is:—"Be well exercised, and rightly clothed. Clothed, and in your right minds;[4] not insane and in rags, nor in soiled fine clothes clutched from each other's shoulders.[5] Fight and weave. Then I myself will answer for the course of the lance, and the colours of the loom."

And now I will ask the reader to look with some care through these following passages respecting modern multitudes and their occupations, written long ago, but left in fragmentary form, in which they must now stay, and be of what use they can.

120. It is not political economy to put a number of

[1] [On noble anger, compare *Lectures on Art*, § 89.]
[2] [On the subject of adulteration, see *Time and Tide*, § 76 and *n.* (Vol. XVII. p. 383).]
[3] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 130 (Vol. XVIII. p. 176).]
[4] [Mark v. 15.]
[5] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 36 *n.* (Vol. XVIII. p. 91 *n.*).]

Digitized by Google

strong men down on an acre of ground, with no lodging, and nothing to eat. Nor is it political economy to build a city on good ground, and fill it with store of corn and treasure, and put a score of lepers to live in it. Political economy creates together the means of life, and the living persons who are to use them; and of both, the best and the most that it can, but imperatively the best, not the most. A few good and healthy men, rather than a multitude of diseased rogues; and a little real milk and wine rather than much chalk and petroleum; but the gist of the whole business is, that the men, and their property, must both be produced together—not one to the loss of the other. Property must not be created in lands desolate by exile of their people,—nor multiplied and depraved humanity, in lands barren of bread.

121. Nevertheless, though the men and their possessions are to be increased at the same time, the first object of thought is always to be the multiplication of a worthy people.[1] The strength of the nation is in its multitude, not in its territory; but only in its sound multitude. It is one thing, both in a man and a nation, to gain flesh, and another to be swollen with putrid humours. Not that multitude ever ought to be inconsistent with virtue. Two men should be wiser than one, and two thousand than two; nor do I know another so gross fallacy in the records of human stupidity as that excuse for neglect of crime by greatness of cities. As if the first purpose of congregation were not to devise laws and repress crimes! as if bees and wasps could live honestly in flocks,—men, only in separate dens!—as if it were easy to help one another on the opposite sides of a mountain, and impossible on the opposite sides of a street![2] But when the men are true and good,

[1] [Compare the passages collected in Vol. XVII. p. xc.; also *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 113 (Vol. XVIII. p. 479).]

[2] [That the aggregation in cities causes greater difficulty in this respect is, however, noted elsewhere by Ruskin: see *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 5. Hence his conception of Bishops as Overseers: "Down in that back street, Bill and Nancy, knocking each other's teeth out!—Does the bishop know all about it?" (*Sesame and Lilies*, § 22; Vol. XVIII. p. 72).]

Digitized by Google

and stand shoulder to shoulder, the strength of any nation is in its quantity of life, not in its land nor gold. The more good men a state has, in proportion to its territory, the stronger the state. And as it has been the madness of economists to seek for gold instead of life, so it has been the madness of kings to seek for land instead of life. They want the town on the other side of the river, and seek it at the spear point: it never enters their stupid heads that to double the honest souls in the town *on this* side of the river, would make them stronger kings; and that this doubling might be done by the ploughshare instead of the spear,[1] and through happiness instead of misery.

Therefore, in brief, this is the object of all true policy and true economy: "utmost multitude of good men on every given space of ground"—imperatively always, *good*, sound, honest men, not a mob of white-faced thieves. So that, on the one hand, all aristocracy is wrong which is inconsistent with numbers; and, on the other, all numbers are wrong which are inconsistent with breeding.

122. Then, touching the accumulation of wealth for the maintenance of such men, observe, that you must never use the terms "money" and "wealth" as synonymous. Wealth consists of the good, and therefore useful, things in the possession of the nation: money is only the written or coined sign of the relative quantities of wealth in each person's possession.[2] All money is a divisible title-deed, of immense importance as an expression of right to property; but absolutely valueless, as property itself. Thus, supposing a nation isolated from all others, the money in its possession is, at its maximum value, worth all the property of the nation, and no more, because no more can be got for it. And the money of all nations is worth, at its maximum, the property of all nations, and no more, for no

[1] [Compare "soldiers of the ploughshare as well as soldiers of the sword," *A Joy for Ever*, § 15 (Vol. XVI. p. 26).]

[2] [Compare *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris*, passim.]

Digitized by Google

more can be got for it. Thus, every article of property produced increases, by its value, the value of all the money in the world, and every article of property destroyed diminishes the value of all the money in the world. If ten men are cast away on a rock, with a thousand pounds in their pockets, and there is on the rock neither food nor shelter, their money is worth simply nothing; for nothing is to be had for it: if they build ten huts, and recover a cask of biscuit from the wreck, then their thousand pounds, at its maximum value, is worth ten huts and a cask of biscuit. If they make their thousand pounds into two thousand by writing new notes, their two thousand pounds are still only worth ten huts and a cask of biscuit. And the law of relative value is the same for all the world, and all the people in it, and all their property, as for ten men on a rock. Therefore, money is truly and finally lost in the degree in which its value is taken from it, (ceasing in that degree to be money at all); and it is truly gained in the degree in which value is added to it. Thus, suppose the money coined by the nation to be a fixed sum, divided very minutely, (say into francs and cents), and neither to be added to, nor diminished. Then every grain of food and inch of lodging added to its possessions makes every cent in its pockets worth proportionally more, and every grain of food it consumes, and inch of roof it allows to fall to ruin, makes every cent in its pockets worth less; and this with mathematical precision. The immediate value of the money at particular times and places depends, indeed, on the humours of the possessors of property; but the nation is in the one case gradually getting richer; and will feel the pressure of poverty steadily everywhere relaxing, whatever the humours of individuals may be; and, in the other case, is gradually growing poorer, and the pressure of its poverty will every day tell more and more, in ways that it cannot explain, but will most bitterly feel.

128. The actual quantity of money which it coins, in relation to its real property, is therefore only of consequence

Digitized by Google

for convenience of exchange; but the proportion in which this quantity of money is divided among individuals expresses their various rights to greater or less proportions of the national property, and must not, therefore, be tampered with. The Government may at any time, with perfect justice, double its issue of coinage, if it gives every man who had ten pounds in his pocket, another ten pounds, and every man who had ten pence, another ten pence; for it thus does not make any of them richer; it merely divides their counters for them into twice the number. But if it gives the newly-issued coins to other people, or keeps them itself, it simply robs the former holders to precisely that extent. This most important function of money, as a title-deed, on the non-violation of which all national soundness of commerce and peace of life depend, has been never rightly distinguished by economists from the quite unimportant function of money as a means of exchange. You can exchange goods,—at some inconvenience indeed, but still you can contrive to do it,—without money at all; but you cannot maintain your claim to the savings of your past life without a document declaring the amount of them, which the nation and its Government will respect.

124. And as economists have lost sight of this great function of money in relation to individual rights, so they have equally lost sight of its function as a representative of good things. That, for every good thing produced, so much money is put into everybody's pocket—is the one simple and primal truth for the public to know, and for economists to teach. How many of them have taught it? Some have; but only incidentally; and others will say it is a truism. If it be, do the public know it? Does your ordinary English householder know that every costly dinner he gives has destroyed as much money as it is worth? Does every well-educated girl—do even the women in high political position—know that every fine dress they wear themselves, or cause to be worn, destroys precisely so much of the national money as the labour and material of it are

Digitized by Google

worth? If this be a truism, it is one that needs proclaiming somewhat louder.

125. That, then, is the relation of money and goods. So much goods, so much money; so little goods, so little money. But, as there is this true relation between money and "goods," or good things, so there is a false relation between money and "bads," or bad things. Many bad things will fetch a price in exchange; but they do not increase the wealth of the country. Good wine is wealth—drugged wine is not; good meat is wealth—putrid meat is not; good pictures are wealth—bad pictures are not. A thing is worth precisely what it can do for you; not what you choose to pay for it. You may pay a thousand pounds for a cracked pipkin, if you please; but you do not by that transaction make the cracked pipkin worth one that will hold water, nor that, nor any pipkin whatsoever, worth more than it was before you paid such sum for it. You may, perhaps, induce many potters to manufacture fissured pots, and many amateurs of clay to buy them; but the nation is, through the whole business so encouraged, rich by the addition to its wealth of so many potsherds—and there an end. The thing is worth what it CAN do for you, not what you think it can; and most national luxuries, now-a-days, are a form of potsherd provided for the solace of a self-complacent Job, voluntarily sedent on his ash-heap.[1]

126. And, also, so far as good things already exist, and have become media of exchange, the variations in their prices are absolutely indifferent to the nation. Whether Mr. A. buys a Titian from Mr. B. for twenty, or for two thousand, pounds, matters not sixpence to the national revenue: that is to say, it matters in nowise to the revenue whether Mr. A. has the picture, and Mr. B. the money, or Mr. B. the picture, and Mr. A. the money. Which of them will spend the money most wisely, and which of them will keep the picture most carefully, is, indeed, a matter of

[1] [See Job ii. 8.]

Digitized by Google

some importance; but this cannot be known by the mere fact of exchange.

127. The wealth of a nation then, first, and its peace and well-being besides, depend on the number of persons it can employ in making good and useful things. I say its well-being also, for the character of men depends more on their occupations than on any teaching we can give them, or principles with which we can imbue them. The employment forms the habits.

. . . . . .[1]

132. . . . I find by me a violent little fragment of undelivered lecture, which puts this, perhaps, still more clearly. Your idle people, (it says,) as they are now, are not merely waste coal-beds. They are explosive coal-beds, which you pay a high annual rent for. You are keeping all these idle persons, remember, at far greater cost than if they were busy. Do you think a vicious person eats less than an honest one? or that it is cheaper to keep a bad man drunk, than a good man sober? There is, I suppose, a dim idea in the mind of the public, that they don't pay for the maintenance of people they don't employ. Those staggering rascals at the street corner, grouped around its splendid angle of public-house, we fancy they are no servants of ours! that we pay them no wages! that no cash out of our pocket is spent over that beer-stained counter!

Whose cash is it then they are spending? It is not got honestly by work. You know that much. Where do they get it from? Who has paid for their dinner and their pot? Those fellows can live only in one of two ways—by pillage or beggary. Their annual income by thieving comes out of the public pocket, you will admit. They are not cheaply

[1] [The rest of § 127 and §§ 128–132 were reprinted from the *Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes:* see Vol. XVII. pp. 541–545. The passage ends with the question "Shall we do so [*i.e.*, "feed the drunkard, vagabond, and thief"] by letting them rob us of their food and do no work for it; or shall we give them their food in appointed quantity, and enforce their doing work which shall be worth it, and which, in process of time, will redeem their own characters, and make them happy and serviceable members of society?"]

Digitized by Google

fed, so far as they are fed by theft. But the rest of their living—all that they don't steal—they must beg. Not with success from you, you think. Wise as benevolent, you never gave a penny in "indiscriminate charity." Well, I congratulate you on the freedom of your conscience from that sin, mine being bitterly burdened with the memory of many a sixpence given to beggars of whom I knew nothing, but that they had pale faces and thin waists. But it is not that kind of street beggary that the vagabonds of our people chiefly practise. It is home beggary that is the worst beggars' trade. Home alms which it is their worst degradation to receive. Those scamps know well enough that you and your wisdom are worth nothing to them. They won't beg of you. They will beg of their sisters, and mothers, and wives, and children, and of any one else who is enough ashamed of being of the same blood with them to pay to keep them out of sight. Every one of those blackguards is the bane of a family. *That* is the deadly "indiscriminate charity"[1]—the charity which each household pays to maintain its own private curse.

133. And you think that is no affair of yours? and that every family ought to watch over and subdue its own living plague? Put it to yourselves this way, then: suppose you knew every one of those families kept an idol in an inner room—a big-bellied bronze figure, to which daily sacrifice and oblation was made; at whose feet so much beer and brandy were poured out every morning on the ground; and before which, every night, good meat, enough for two men's keep, was set, and left, till it was putrid, and then carried out and thrown on the dunghill;—you would put an end to that form of idolatry with your best diligence, I suppose. You would understand then that the beer, and brandy, and meat, were wasted; and that the burden imposed by each household on itself lay heavily through them on the whole community? But, suppose

[1] [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, Appendix vi. (Vol. XVII. p. 293); *Sesame and Lilies*, § 136 (Vol. XVIII. p. 182); and *Bible of Amiens*, ch. iv. § 41.]

Digitized by Google

farther, that this idol were not of silent and quiet bronze only;—but an ingenious mechanism, wound up every morning, to run itself down in automatic blasphemies; that it struck and tore with its hands the people who set food before it; that it was anointed with poisonous unguents, and infected the air for miles round. You would interfere with the idolatry then, straightway? Will you not interfere with it now, when the infection that the venomous idol spreads is not merely death—but sin?

184. So far the old lecture. Returning to cool English, the end of the matter is, that sooner or later, we shall have to register our people; and to know how they live; and to make sure, if they are capable of work, that right work is given them to do.

. . . . . .[1]

I give now, for such farther illustration as they contain of the points I desire most to insist upon with respect both to education and employment, a portion of the series of notes published some time ago in the *Art Journal*, on the opposition of Modesty and Liberty, and the unescapable law of wise restraint. I am sorry that they are written obscurely;—and it may be thought affectedly:—but the fact is, I have always had three different ways of writing: one, with the single view of making myself understood, in which I necessarily omit a great deal of what comes into my head; another, in which I say what I think ought to be said, in what I suppose to be the best words I can find for it; (which is in reality an affected style—be it good or bad;) and my third way of writing is to say all that comes into my head for my own pleasure, in the first words that come, retouching them afterwards into (approximate) grammar. These notes for the *Art Journal* were so written; and I like them myself, of course; but ask the reader's pardon for their confusedness.

[1] [Here the reprint from the pamphlet—*Notes on the General Principles of Employment for the Destitute and Criminal Classes*—was resumed: see Vol. XVII. pp. 545–546: "The different classes of work for which bodies of men could be consistently organized . . . the service of women and children."]

Digitized by Google

135[1]–142. . . . . .

143. Next to Modesty, and her delight in measures, let us reflect a little on the character of her adversary, the Goddess of Liberty, and her delight in the absence of measures, or in false ones. It is true that there are liberties and liberties. Yonder torrent, crystal-clear, and arrow-swift, with its spray leaping into the air like white troops of fawns, is free enough. Lost, presently, amidst bankless, boundless marsh—soaking in slow shallowness, as it will, hither and thither, listless, among the poisonous reeds and unresisting slime—it is free also. We may choose which liberty we like,—the restraint of voiceful rock, or the dumb and edgeless shore of darkened sand. Of that evil liberty, which men are now glorifying, and proclaiming as essence of gospel to all the earth, and will presently, I suppose, proclaim also to the stars, with invitation to them *out* of their courses,—and of its opposite continence, which is the clasp and χρυσέη περόνη of Aglaia's cestus, we must try to find out something true. For no quality of art has been more powerful in its influence on public mind. . . .[2]

160. Thus far the notes on Freedom. Now, lastly, here is some talk which I tried at the time to make intelligible; and with which I close this volume, because it will serve sufficiently to express the practical relation in which I think the art and imagination of the Greeks stand to our own; and will show the reader that my view of that relation is unchanged, from the first day on which I began to write, until now.

[1] [Here followed in *The Queen of the Air*, reprinted with slight verbal corrections (see "Variæ Lectiones," above, p. 46), §§ 22–29 of *The Cestus of Aglaia*: see above, pp. 72–81 (the reprint in *The Queen of the Air* ending with the words "endlessly manifold victory"). In § 143 the passage from "there are liberties and liberties" is also taken, with alterations, from *The Cestus of Aglaia*, § 68 (see above, pp. 118–119).]

[2] [Here in *The Queen of the Air* (§§ 143–159) are reprinted §§ 69–85 of *The Cestus of Aglaia*: see above, pp. 120–133.]

Digitized by Google

The Hercules of Camarina

Address to the Students of the Art School of South Lambeth, March 15th, 1869

161. Among the photographs of Greek coins which present so many admirable subjects for your study, I must speak for the present of one only: the Hercules of Camarina.[1] You have, represented by a Greek workman, in that coin, the face of a man, and the skin of a lion's head. And the man's face is like a man's face, but the lion's skin is not like a lion's skin.

162. Now there are some people who will tell you that Greek art is fine, because it is true; and because it carves men's faces as like men's faces as it can.

And there are other people who will tell you that Greek art is fine because it is not true; and carves a lion's skin so as to look not at all like a lion's skin.

And you fancy that one or other of these sets of people must be wrong, and are perhaps much puzzled to find out which you should believe.

But neither of them are wrong, and you will have eventually to believe, or rather to understand and know, in reconciliation, the truths taught by each;—but for the present, the teachers of the first group are those you must follow.

It is they who tell you the deepest and usefullest truth, which involves all others in time. *Greek art, and all other art, is fine when it makes a man's face as like a man's face*

[1] [The front of the coin, which formed the subject of this lecture, is engraved in the centre of Plate XVIII. The coin may be seen in the British Museum (II. C. 17 in the collection of electrotypes of Select Greek and Roman Coins). On the reverse is a representation of Pallas Athena as a victor at the Olympic games, with a flying "Victory" crowning her (see above, § 72, p. 367): to the goddess is the glory given. The coin thus illustrates the fifth Olympian ode of Pindar, written to celebrate the victory of Psaumis of Camarina: "Thy sacred grove, O city-guarding Pallas, doth the victor sing." For another reference to the coin, see below, Appendix ii., § 6 (p. 467). For particulars of the other coins engraved on Plate XVIII., see the Introduction, above, pp. lxxvii.-lxxviii.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Riders of Tarentum
Hercules of Camarina
Nike of Heraclea Juno of Argos

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

as it can.[1] Hold to that. All kinds of nonsense are talked to you, now-a-days, ingeniously and irrelevantly about art. Therefore, for the most part of the day, shut your ears, and keep your eyes open: and understand primarily, what you may, I fancy, understand easily, that the greatest masters of all greatest schools—Phidias, Donatello, Titian, Velasquez, or Sir Joshua Reynolds—all tried to make human creatures as like human creatures as they could; and that anything less like humanity than their work, is not so good as theirs.

Get that well driven into your heads; and don't let it out again, at your peril.

163. Having got it well in, you may then farther understand, safely, that there is a great deal of secondary work in pots, and pans, and floors, and carpets, and shawls, and architectural ornament, which ought, essentially, to be *unlike* reality, and to depend for its charm on quite other qualities than imitative ones. But all such art is inferior and secondary—much of it more or less instinctive and animal; and a civilized human creature can only learn its principles rightly, by knowing those of great civilized art first—which is always the representation, to the utmost of its power, of whatever it has got to show—made to look as like the thing as possible. Go into the National Gallery, and look at the foot of Correggio's Venus there.[2] Correggio made it as like a foot as he could, and you won't easily find anything liker. Now, you will find on any Greek vase something meant for a foot, or a hand, which is not at all like one. The Greek vase is a good thing in its way, but Correggio's picture is the best work.

164. So, again, go into the Turner room of the National Gallery, and look at Turner's drawing of "Ivy Bridge."[3] You will find the water in it is like real water, and the

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 122.]
[2] ["The Education of Cupid," No. 10. For other references to the picture, see *The Study of Architecture*, § 10 (above, p. 29 *n.*).]
[3] [No. 556: see Vol. XIII. p. 269.]

Digitized by Google

ducks in it are like real ducks. Then go into the British Museum, and look for an Egyptian landscape, and you will find the water in that constituted of blue zigzags, not at all like water;[1] and ducks in the middle of it made of red lines, looking not in the least as if they could stand stuffing with sage and onions. They are very good in their way, but Turner's are better.

165. I will not pause to fence my general principle against what you perfectly well know of the due contradiction,—that a thing may be painted very like, yet painted ill. Rest content with knowing that it *must* be like, if it is painted well; and take this further general law:—Imitation is like charity. When it is done for love, it is lovely; when it is done for show, hateful.

166. Well, then, this Greek coin is fine, first because the face is like a face. Perhaps you think there is something particularly handsome in the face, which you can't see in the photograph, or can't at present appreciate. But there is nothing of the kind. It is a very regular, quiet, commonplace sort of face; and any average English gentleman's, of good descent, would be far handsomer.

167. Fix that in your heads also, therefore, that Greek faces are not particularly beautiful.[2] Of the much nonsense against which you are to keep your ears shut, that which is talked to you of the Greek ideal of beauty, is among the absolutest. There is not a single instance of a very beautiful head left by the highest school of Greek art. On coins, there is even no approximately beautiful one.[3] The

[1] [See the wall-paintings from Thebes affixed to recesses on the east wall of the North Egyptian Gallery.]

[2] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 194.]

[3] [For the Juno of Argos, see III. B. 36 in the British Museum (Plate 23 in the *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Ancients*): the head is engraved on Plate XVIII. here. For the Athena of Athens, II. B. 20 (Plate 13)—a coin which is reproduced in Fig. 4 of *Aratra Pentelici* (Vol. XX.). An archaic Athena of Corinth is given in Fig. 5 in *Aratra:* a more pleasing head is III. B. 31 (Plate 23) in the British Museum. For the "sensual" Athena of Thurium, see III. C. 17 (Plate 25)—the obverse of a coin already referred to (above, p. 22): another "Athena of Thurium" and the "Siren Ligeia" are given in Plates XX. and XIX. of *Aratra*. For a specimen of the celebrated heads of Arethusa on Syracusan coins, see III. C. 29 (Plate 25) in the British Museum, and Plate II. in *Aratra Pentelici*. The Mercury

Digitized by Google

Juno of Argos is a virago; the Athena of Athens grotesque; the Athena of Corinth is insipid; and of Thurium, sensual. The Siren Ligeia, and fountain of Arethusa, on the coins of Terina and Syracuse, are prettier, but totally without expression, and chiefly set off by their well-curled hair. You might have expected something subtle in Mercuries; but the Mercury of Ænus is a very stupid-looking fellow, in a cap like a bowl, with a knob on the top of it. The Bacchus of Thasos is a drayman with his hair pomatum'd. The Jupiter of Syracuse is, however, calm and refined; and the Apollo of Clazomenæ would have been impressive, if he had not come down to us much flattened by friction. But on the whole, the merit of Greek coins does not primarily depend on beauty of features, nor even, in the period of highest art, that of the statues. You may take the Venus of Melos[1] as a standard of beauty of the central Greek type. She has tranquil, regular, and lofty features; but could not hold her own for a moment against the beauty of a simple English girl, of pure race and kind heart.

168. And the reason that Greek art, on the whole, bores you, (and you know it does,) is that you are always forced to look in it for something that is not there; but which may be seen every day, in real life, all round you; and which you are naturally disposed to delight in, and ought to delight in. For the Greek race was not at all one of exalted beauty, but only of general and healthy completeness of form. They were only, and could be only, beautiful in body to the degree that they were beautiful in soul; (for you will find, when you read deeply into

of Ænus is the central figure on Plate VIII. of *Aratra*. For a Bacchus of Thasos (which, however, hardly bears out Ruskin's description), see II. B. 7 (Plate 12) in the British Museum. The Zeus of Syracuse is given in Plate XVIII. of *Aratra*, and the Apollo of Clazomenæ is on Plate X. in the same; for another reference to the Apollo of Clazomenæ, see *Ethics of the Dust*, § 107 (Vol. XVIII. p. 343).]

[1] [Elsewhere referred to by Ruskin as "the Venus Victrix" of the Louvre: see *Time and Tide*, § 160 (Vol. XVII. p. 448). Compare in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 166), a note of 1883, where Ruskin says that "living girls may be very pretty without being like the Venus de' Medici."]

Digitized by Google

the matter, that the body is only the soul made visible[1]). And the Greeks were indeed very good people, much better people than most of us think, or than many of us are; but there are better people alive now than the best of them, and lovelier people to be seen now, than the loveliest of them.

169. Then, what *are* the merits of this Greek art, which make it so exemplary for you? Well, not that it is beautiful, but that it is Right.* All that it desires to do, it does, and all that it does, does well. You will find, as you advance in the knowledge of art, that its laws of self-restraint are very marvellous; that its peace of heart, and contentment in doing a simple thing, with only one or two qualities, restrictedly desired, and sufficiently attained, are a most wholesome element of education for you, as opposed to the wild writhing, and wrestling, and longing for the moon, and tilting at windmills, and agony of eyes, and torturing of fingers, and general spinning out of one's soul into fiddlestrings, which constitute the ideal life of a modern artist.

Also observe, there is entire masterhood of its business up to the required point. A Greek does not reach after other people's strength, nor out-reach his own. He never tries to paint before he can draw; he never tries to lay on flesh where there are no bones; and he never expects to find the bones of anything in his inner consciousness. Those are his first merits—sincere and innocent purpose, strong common sense and principle, and all the strength that comes of these, and all the grace that follows on that strength.

170. But, secondly, Greek art is always exemplary in disposition of masses, which is a thing that in modern days students rarely look for, artists not enough, and the public never. But, whatever else Greek work may fail of, you may be always sure its masses are well placed, and their

* Compare above, § 101 [p. 388].

[1] [On this subject, compare Vol. IV. p. 182; and Vol. XVII. p. 149.]

Digitized by Google

placing has been the object of the most subtle care. Look, for instance, at the inscription in front of this Hercules of the name of the town—Camarina. You can't read it, even though you may know Greek, without some pains; for the sculptor knew well enough that it mattered very little whether you read it or not, for the Camarina Hercules could tell his own story;[1] but what did above all things matter was, that no K or A or M should come in a wrong place with respect to the outline of the head, and divert the eye from it, or spoil any of its lines. So the whole inscription is thrown into a sweeping curve of gradually diminishing size, continuing from the lion's paws, round the neck, up to the forehead, and answering a decorative purpose as completely as the curls of the mane opposite. Of these, again, you cannot change or displace one without mischief: they are almost as even in reticulation as a piece of basket-work; but each has a different form and a due relation to the rest, and if you set to work to draw that mane rightly, you will find that, whatever time you give to it, you can't get the tresses quite into their places, and that every tress out of its place does an injury. If you want to test your powers of accurate drawing you may make that lion's mane your *pons asinorum*. I have never yet met with a student who didn't make an ass in a lion's skin of himself, when he tried it.

171. Granted, however, that these tresses may be finely placed, still they are not like a lion's mane. So we come back to the question,—if the face is to be like a man's face, why is not the lion's mane to be like a lion's mane? Well, because it can't be like a lion's mane without too much trouble;—and inconvenience after that, and poor success, after all. Too much trouble, in cutting the die into fine fringes and jags; inconvenience after that,—because fringes and jags would spoil the surface of a coin; poor success after all,—because, though you can easily stamp cheeks

[1] [On the comparative rudeness of inscriptions on Greek coins, compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 356 and *n.*).]

Digitized by Google

and foreheads smooth at a blow, you can't stamp projecting tresses fine at a blow, whatever pains you take with your die.

So your Greek uses his common sense, wastes no time, loses no skill, and says to you, "Here are beautifully set tresses, which I have carefully designed and easily stamped. Enjoy them; and if you cannot understand that they mean lion's mane, heaven mend your wits."

172. See then, you have in this work, well-founded knowledge, simple and right aims, thorough mastery of handicraft, splendid invention in arrangement, unerring common sense in treatment,—merits, these, I think, exemplary enough to justify our tormenting you a little with Greek Art. But it has one merit more than these, the greatest of all. *It always means something worth saying. Not merely worth saying for that time only, but for all time.*[1] What do you think this helmet of lion's hide is always given to Hercules for? You can't suppose it means only that he once killed a lion, and always carried its skin afterwards to show that he had, as Indian sportsmen send home stuffed rugs, with claws at the corners, and a lump in the middle, which one tumbles over every time one stirs the fire. What *was* this Nemean Lion, whose spoils were evermore to cover Hercules from the cold? Not merely a large specimen of Felis Leo, ranging the fields of Nemea, be sure of that. This Nemean cub was one of a bad litter. Born of Typhon and Echidna,[2]—of the whirlwind and the snake,—Cerberus his brother, the Hydra of Lerna his sister,[3]—it must have been difficult to get his hide off him. He had to be found in darkness too, and dealt upon without weapons, by grip at the throat—arrows and club of no avail against him. What does all that mean?

173. It means that the Nemean Lion is the first great adversary of life, whatever that may be—to Hercules, or

[1] [The italics here and on the next page are introduced in accordance with Ruskin's note in his copy.]

[2] [For Typhon and Echidna, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 398–399).]

[3] [Compare § 4; above, p. 299.]

Digitized by Google

to any of us, then or now. The first monster we have to strangle, or to be destroyed by, fighting in the dark, and with none to help us, only Athena standing by, to encourage with her smile. Every man's Nemean Lion lies in wait for him somewhere. The slothful man says, there is a lion in the path. He says well. The quite *un*slothful man says the same, and knows it too. But they differ in their further reading of the text. The slothful man says, *I* shall be slain, and the unslothful, IT shall be. It is the first ugly and strong enemy that rises against us, all future victory depending on victory over that. Kill it; and through all the rest of life, what was once dreadful is your armour, and you are clothed with that conquest for every other, and helmed with its crest of fortitude for evermore.[1]

Alas, we have most of us to walk bareheaded; but that is the meaning of the story of Nemea,—worth laying to heart and thinking of, sometimes, when you see a dish garnished with parsley, which was the crown at the Nemean games.

174. How far, then, have we got, in our list of the merits of Greek art now?

Sound knowledge.
Simple aims.
Mastered craft.
Vivid invention.
Strong common sense.
And eternally true and wise meaning.

Are these not enough? Here is one more then, which will find favour, I should think, with the British Lion. *Greek art is never frightened at anything, it is always cool.*

175. It differs essentially from all other art, past or present, in this *incapability of being frightened.* Half the power and imagination of every other school depend on a certain feverish terror mingling with their sense of beauty;

[1] [On this point compare ch. x., "The Heraldic Ordinaries," in *The Eagle's Nest*, § 229.]

Digitized by Google

—the feeling that a child has in a dark room, or a sick person in seeing ugly dreams. But the Greeks never have ugly dreams. They cannot draw anything ugly when they try. Sometimes they put themselves to their wits'-end to draw an ugly thing,—the Medusa's head, for instance,—but they can't do it,—not they,—because nothing frightens them. They widen the mouth, and grind the teeth, and puff the cheeks, and set the eyes a-goggling; and the thing is only ridiculous after all, not the least dreadful, for there is no dread in their hearts.[1] Pensiveness; amazement; often deepest grief and desolateness. All these; but terror never. Everlasting calm in the presence of all fate; and joy such as they could win, not indeed in a perfect beauty, but in beauty at perfect rest! A kind of art this, surely, to be looked at, and thought upon sometimes with profit, even in these latter days.

176. To be looked at sometimes. Not continually, and never as a model for imitation. For you are not Greeks; but, for better or worse, English creatures; and cannot do, even if it were a thousand times better worth doing, anything well, except what your English hearts shall prompt, and your English skies teach you. For all good art is the natural utterance of its own people in its own day.[2]

But also, your own art is a better and brighter one than ever this Greek art was. Many motives, powers, and insights have been added to those elder ones. The very corruptions into which we have fallen are signs of a subtle life, higher than theirs was, and therefore more fearful in its faults and death. Christianity has neither superseded, nor, by itself, excelled heathenism; but it has added its own good, won also by many a Nemean contest in dark valleys, to all that was good and noble in heathenism: and our present thoughts and work, when they are right, are nobler than the heathen's. And we are not reverent

[1] [For references to examples in the British Museum, see E. T. Cook's *Handbook to the Greek and Roman Antiquities*, pp. 91, 323.]
[2] [Compare Vol. V. p. 127, and Vol. XII. p. 151.]

Digitized by Google

enough to them, because we possess too much of them. That sketch of four cherub heads from an English girl, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, at Kensington,[1] is an incomparably finer thing than ever the Greeks did. Ineffably tender in the touch, yet Herculean in power; innocent, yet exalted in feeling; pure in colour as a pearl: reserved and decisive in design, as this Lion crest;—if *it* alone existed of such, if it were a picture by Zeuxis, the only one left in the world, and you built a shrine for it, and were allowed to see it only seven days in a year, it alone would teach you all of art that you ever needed to know. But you do not learn from this or any other such work, because you have not reverence enough for them, and are trying to learn from all at once, and from a hundred other masters besides.

177. Here, then, is the practical advice which I would venture to deduce from what I have tried to show you. Use Greek art as a first, not a final, teacher. Learn to draw carefully from Greek work; above all, to place forms correctly, and to use light and shade tenderly. Never allow yourselves black shadows. It is easy to make things look round and projecting; but the things to exercise yourselves in are the placing of the masses, and the modelling of the lights. It is an admirable exercise to take a pale wash of colour for all the shadows, never reinforcing it everywhere, but drawing the statue as if it were in far distance, making all the darks one flat pale tint. Then model from those into the lights, rounding as well as you can, on those subtle conditions. In your chalk drawings, separate the lights from the darks at once all over; then reinforce the darks slightly where absolutely necessary, and put your whole strength on the lights and their limits. Then, when you have learned to draw thoroughly, take one master for your painting, as you would have done necessarily in old

[1] [Now at the National Gallery, No. 182: "Heads of Angels" (portraits in different views of the daughter of Lord William Gordon); there are *five* heads. Compare *Art of England*, § 67.]

Digitized by Google

times by being put into his school (were I to choose for you, it should be among six men only,—Titian, Correggio, Paul Veronese, Velasquez, Reynolds, or Holbein.[1] If you are a landscapist, Turner must be your only guide, for no other great landscape painter has yet lived[2]); and having chosen, do your best to understand your own chosen master, and obey *him*, and no one else, till you have strength to deal with the nature itself round you, and then, be your own master and see with your own eyes. If you have got masterhood or sight in you, that is the way to make the most of them; and if you have neither, you will at least be sound in your work, prevented from immodest and useless effort, and protected from vulgar and fantastic error.

And so I wish you all, good speed, and the favour of Hercules and the Muses; and to those who shall best deserve them, the crown of Parsley[3] first, and then of the Laurel.

[1] [Compare Ruskin's list in *Elements of Drawing*, § 256 (Vol. XV. p. 220).]
[2] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. p. 453).]
[3] [For another reference to the Parsley crown—the reward of Victor in the Nemean games—see above, § 77, p. 369.]

Digitized by Google

[SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS[1]

Lecture i.—"Athena in the Heavens": a lecture on Greek Myths of Storm.

§ 1. Sincerity of the old mythology.

§ 2. The veiled meaning in myths.

§§ 3, 4. The simple belief in miraculous events gradually invested with moral meanings.

§§ 5, 6. The origin of myths (1) in historical events, represented by the fancy under figures personifying them (this branch of the subject is not here to be touched upon); (2) in natural phenomena, similarly personified. The root of the myth is in these phenomena; then, secondly, the personification becomes "a companionable deity"; and, thirdly, the image is invested with moral significance.

§ 7. The real meaning of any myth (that is, the meaning which is eternally and beneficently true) is that which it has at the noblest age of the nation among whom it is current.

§ 8. Such meanings can only be read by an intelligent answering sympathy.

§ 9. The age in Greek mythology selected for examination in this book is that of Pindar and Æschylus—"near the beginning of the central faith" of Greece.

§ 10. The four elemental forces.

§ 11. First, Demeter, the Spirit of Earth.

§ 12. Second, Poseidon, the Spirit of Water.

§ 13. Third, Fire—Hephæstus, the Spirit of Earthly Fire; Apollo, of Heavenly Fire.

§ 14. Fourth, Air—Athena: physically, the queen of the air; spiritually, the queen of the breath of man, both bodily and spiritually.

§ 15. Athena as the queen of the four cardinal virtues, and her corresponding attributes.

§ 16. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as songs of noble passion and noble patience.

§§ 17, 18. The importance of the ethical element in the Homeric poems.

§ 19 (Ruskin now passes to the inferior deities of storm). The myth of Æolus illustrated from Homer.

[1] [This is not by Ruskin, but is added by the editors of this edition, as explained above; Introduction, p. lxvi.]

Digitized by Google

§§ 20–22. The myths of Boreas and the Harpies, in their physical and moral meanings.

§§ 23, 24. The myth of Tantalus, and allied myths; with notes on the dog in mythology.

§§ 25–28. Hermes as the Lord of Cloud.

§§ 29, 30. Other cloud myths.

§ 31. Summary of the functions of Athena as Queen of the Air, physically.

§§ 32–37. (I.) The Spirit of Life giving vitality to the blood.

§ 38. (II.) The Air giving vegetative impulse to the earth.

§ 39. (III.) The Air giving motion to the sea.

§ 40. (IV.) The Air nourishing artificial light.

§§ 41–43. (V.) The Air conveying vibration of sound.

§ 44. Summary of the functions of Athena as Queen of the Air, spiritually —(1) the Spirit of Life in material organism (Lecture ii.); and (2) inspired and impulsive wisdom in human conduct and human art (Lecture iii.).

§ 45. Sincerity of the common people's belief in a real Athena.

§ 46. The more refined belief of the upper classes.

§§ 47–49. Sincerity of the poets and philosophers.

§ 50. Greek religion and a future life.

Lecture ii.—"Athena in the Earth": a study of the relations of Athena to the vital force in material organism.

§§ 51–59. Reality of such a spiritual force; giving their several shapes to things, and their several feelings.

§§ 60, 61. Illustrated from the case of the spirit in the plant.

§§ 62, 63. Distinctions of species in relation to man. (In this part of the book, Ruskin's argument, it will be noticed by the reader, rests on the assumption of design, as in Butler's *Analogy*.)

§ 64. The argument to be illustrated from two orders—birds and reptiles —as characteristic of the moral aspect of the animal world.

§§ 65, 66. The Bird as the very spirit of the air.

§ 67 (parenthetical). The importance of natural myths.

§ 68. The Serpent as the spirit of the dust; a divine hieroglyph of the demoniac power of the earth.

§§ 69, 70. But the earth has a purifying, as well as a corrupting, function; hence the serpent in connexion with Athena.

§§ 71, 72. Serpent and bird myths as tests of the moral state and fineness of intelligence of different races.

§§ 73–89 (resumption of the argument from § 64). The distinctions of species in the plant world in their moral aspect.

§ 91. Athena as the formative spirit in such material organisms.

§ 92. Significance of her epithet "Glaukopis," in connexion with the light of heaven.

§§ 93, 94. Significance of Athena's owl and of the blue of her ægis.

Digitized by Google

§ 95. Athena's "sacred chord of colours," in connexion with the creative spirit of the earth.

§§ 96, 97. Early types in art give little clue to the imaginative conception of mythology.

§§ 98–100. Summary of the creative forces symbolised by Athena.

Lecture iii.—"Athena in the Heart": notes relating to the conception of Athena as directress of the imagination and will.

§ 101. She teaches men to make their work, not so much beautiful, as right. Rightness of work in art is connected with virtue of character.

§§ 102–105. General assertion of this principle.

§ 106. The Foundation of art in moral character.

§§ 107, 112. Art-gift as the result of inherited character.

§§ 108–111, 113. Great art, being rooted in such virtue, is in its essence didactic.

§§ 114–116. Foundation of the arts in war.

§§ 117, 118. Athena as presiding over righteous war.

§ 119. Athena as presiding over well-ordered industry.

§§ 120–126. The aim of a sound system of Political Economy.

§§ 127–134. Principles of Employment.

§§ 135–160. A discourse on Liberty and Restraint.

§§ 161–177. "The Hercules of Camarina": a lecture on the characteristics of Greek Art. (This portion of the book connects with § 101, the main virtue of Greek art being said to be "not that it is beautiful, but that it is Right").]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

IX

VERONA, AND ITS RIVERS

(1870)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—This lecture was delivered at the Royal Institution on Friday, February 4, 1870 (the title being, "A Talk respecting Verona and its Rivers"), and was first reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of February 5, 1870. The report, though it omits some passages and summarises others, is for the rest almost *verbatim*, the author's MS. having presumably been lent to the reporter for the purpose. This report in the *Pall Mall Gazette* was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, March 1892, vol. iii. pp. 241–247, and thence in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii. 1892, pp. 211–217.

An account of the lecture was published, secondly, in the *Proceedings of the Royal Institution*, vol. vi. pp. 55–61. This is a synopsis of the lecture, with several textual quotations, supplied by Ruskin. It is, however, not so full as the report in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. The synopsis was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 654–664 (§§ 522–532); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. ii. pp. 279–291 (§§ 231–241).

The complete lecture, printed from the author's MS., was published in 1895 in a volume (arranged by W. G. Collingwood) with the following title-page :—

> Verona | and Other Lectures | By | John Ruskin, | D.C.L., LL.D., | Honorary Student of Christ Church, Honorary Fellow of Corpus | Christi College, and sometime Slade Professor of | Fine Art in the University of Oxford. | With Illustrations | From Drawings by the Author. | George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington | and | 156 Charing Cross Road, London. | 1894.

Octavo, pp. xx. + 168. On the reverse of the title-page at the foot "[*All rights reserved*]." Editor's Introduction, signed "W. G. C. Coniston, *Nov.* 1893," pp. v.–xvi. Contents, p. xvii.; List of Illustrations, p. xix. "Verona, and its Rivers" (with fly-title), pp. 1–30; "The Story of Arachne" (again with fly-title, as in the case of the other contents), pp. 31–54 (see in this edition, Vol. XX.); "The Tortoise of Ægina," pp. 55–75 (in this edition, Vol. XX.); "Candida Casa," pp. 77–108; "Appendix to 'Candida Casa,' On Saxon Money," pp. 109–111; "Mending the Sieve," pp. 113–143; "Appendix to 'Mending the Sieve,' On the Foundation of Cluny," pp. 144–152 (for these latter contents, see in this edition the volume containing *Our Fathers have Told Us*). Index, pp. 153–168. Imprint (at the foot of p. 168): "Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson and Co. | Edinburgh and London."

Issued on June 15, 1894. 250 copies on hand-made paper, large post quarto, bound in half parchment (30s.); and 800 copies, bound in green cloth (15s., reduced in July 1900 to 12s. 6d.). The ordinary issue is still current.

The following is the "List of Illustrations," with references added to the places where they will severally be found in this edition :—

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

		In this Edition
I. From the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona; Single Niche, and Ironwork	*Frontispiece*	here p. 429.
II. Fountain at Verona; 1841 . . .	*To face page* 3	*Præterita.*
III. Can Grande della Scala; equestrian statue . .	4	Vol. XI. p. 88.
IV. Grotesques; south door of the Duomo, Verona .	13	Vol. XII. p. 193.

Digitized by Google

		In this Edition
V. The Castelbarco Tomb, Sta. Anastasia, Verona, 1335	*To face page* 17	here p. 451.
VI. Upper part of the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona	18	here p. 440.
VII. Detail from Can Grande's Tomb: Madonna of the Annunciation, and heraldic Dog	20	here p. 442.
VIII. Can Grande at the Battle of Vicenza; bas-relief .	21	here p. 442.
IX. Angle of the Ducal Palace, looking seaward from the Piazzetta, Venice	26	Vol. X. p. 358.
X. Capital of Verona	30	here p. 434.
XI. Lion of Leontini, and Tortoise of Ægina. (From casts of the Greek coins.)	64	Vol. XX.
XII. Plan of a Cistercian Abbey	133	*Our Fathers.*

(All these plates, except the last two, are photographic reproductions of drawings by the Author.)

The Catalogue (here appended, pp. 449–458) of Drawings shown at the Lecture on Verona was published in 1870 as a pamphlet, with the following title on the front wrapper:—

> Drawings and Photographs, Illustrative of | the Architecture of Verona, shown at | the Royal Institution, Feb. 4th, 1870. | London: Queen Street Printing Office. | 1870.

Octavo, pp. 15. No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. Issued stitched, without wrappers.

The catalogue was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 665–673 (§§ 533–544); and again in the second edition of that work, 1899, vol. ii. pp. 292–302 (§§ 242–252).

A review of the Catalogue appeared in the *Art Journal*, March 1870, N.S., vol. 9, p. 94.

Variæ Lectiones.—In this edition the text of 1894 has been followed, except where now and again it inadvertently differs from the MS. Thus in § 1, line 11, "cool" is substituted for "the cool"; § 3, line 4, "rises" for "rise"; § 12, line 6, "all" is omitted before "art"; and § 23, line 21, "artists'" is substituted for "artist's" (in accordance with the synopsis in the *Proceedings*).

The synopsis in the *Proceedings* gives parts of §§ 2, 3, 6, 9, 12–17, 23, 24, 26, 29 to end; and summarises §§ 11 and 25. This synopsis was no doubt revised by Ruskin, and shows some differences of text (which were not adopted in 1894), as follows:—

> § 2, lines 12, 13, "lived; and, under" for "lived and died. Under . . ."
>
> § 3, line 6, "and it represents" for "and they represent"; line 10, "it is" for "this is."
>
> § 9, line 13, "centre" for "central light"; line 16, "those" for "these."
>
> § 12, lines 4–6, "but wild beasts" for "but out of . . . nature," and "this period" for "that date."
>
> § 13, line 6, "now" omitted in the synopsis, which reads "do not expect any more to find wild beasts to hunt" for "must . . . beasts"; line 13, "of" before "pleasure" omitted.
>
> § 30, lines 12–13, "that" for "the mischief."
>
> § 31, lines 12–13 read "falls, is literally rain of gold. We seek . . ."; line 16, "wild" for "frantic" (and so the MS.).
>
> § 32, line 12, "plan" for "plans" (and so the MS.).

In the Catalogue, No. 43 (p. 457), "(R.)" has here been added.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Niche on the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

VERONA, AND ITS RIVERS

(*A Lecture given at the Royal Institution, Friday, February* 4, 1870)

1. If you chance to be at Verona[1] on a clear, warm summer's day, and to be weary—as may well happen—at the end of it, take a light carriage, and drive out at the eastern gate (on the way to the station for Venice). You will see, fifty yards beyond the gate, a good road turning to the left—and from that, as immediately, another turning to the left again, which, by a gradual slope, begins to ascend the hill on which the eastern walls of Verona are built.

You will then presently find yourself, if it is towards evening, in the shade of those walls, and in cool and pure air, ascending, by a winding road, a hill covered with maize and vines; into the rocks of which, between you and the city walls, a steep ditch has been cut,—some thirty feet deep by sixty or eighty wide,—the defence of the city on that side being trusted to this one magnificent trench cut out of the solid rock, and to the precipice-like wall, above, with towers, crested with forked battlements, set along it at due intervals.

2. It was possible to cut that rock-trench—which, as you will find presently—is carried up the hill beside you for about an English mile—without gunpowder, because the rock is a soft and crumbling limestone, on which, when you see the dusty banks of it emerge under the hedges by the roadside, you, if a member of the Royal Institution, must look with great reverence. For in that white rock there

[1] [Compare the descriptions of Verona in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 1 (Vol. XII. p. 15 and *n.*); and *A Joy for Ever*, § 76 (Vol. XVI. p. 66): see, too, Ruskin's drawing, given at that place, of the view from the heights above Verona.]

Digitized by Google

are fossil-creatures, still so like the living creatures they were once, that there it first occurred to the human brain to imagine that the buried shapes were not mockeries of life, but had indeed once lived and died.

Under those white banks by the roadside was born, like a poor Italian gipsy, the Modern Science of Geology.[1]

3. Whether a member of the Royal Institution or not—if you are a member of any Institution of a social and civil character—you must look with still greater reverence on the grey moat, and on the wall that rises between you and the sun. The wall was chiefly built, the moat entirely excavated, by Can Grande della Scala;[2] and they represent typically the form of Defence which rendered it possible for the life and the arts of Citizens to be preserved and practised in an age of habitual war. Not only so—but this is the wall of the actual city which headed the great Lombard league[3]—which was the beginner of personal and independent power in the Italian nation, and the first banner-bearer, therefore, of all that has been vitally independent in religion and in art throughout the entire Christian world to this day.

4. The road ascends continually; the vine-clad slope on your right becoming steeper and prouder—the great wall drawing itself out, tower above tower,—and the blue of distant Lombardy flowing deep and deeper over its lower battlements. After walking the horses about a mile, there

[1] ["The study of organic fossils was first pursued with connexion and system in Italy. The hills which on each side skirt the mountain-range of the Apennines are singularly rich in remains of marine animals. When these remarkable objects drew the attention of thoughtful men, controversies soon arose whether they really were the remains of living creatures, or the productions of some capricious or mysterious power by which the forms of such creatures were mimicked. . . . As one of the first persons who applied a sound and vigorous intellect to these subjects, we may notice the celebrated painter, Leonardo da Vinci. . . . Going onwards with this view we may notice Fracostoro, who wrote concerning the petrifactions which were brought to light in the mountains of Verona, when, in 1517, they were excavated for the purpose of repairing the city" (Whewell's *History of the Inductive Sciences*, book xviii. ch i. section 2).]

[2] [Can Grande (Francesco della Scala) died 1329.]

[3] [Formed in 1167, on the initiative of the cities of the Veronese March, which had already made a league amongst themselves against the Emperor.]

Digitized by Google

is a level bit of road which brings you to the upper angle of the wall; and thence, looking down the northern descent, you may see a great round tower at the foot of it—not forked,—this, in battlements, but with embrasures for guns.

Now, the rock-banks under which you have passed were the cradle of modern science. The battlemented wall was the cradle of civic life. That low circular tower is the cradle of modern war and of all its desolation.[1] It is the first European tower for artillery: the beginning of fortification against gunpowder. The beginning, that is to say, of the end of *all* fortification; of the system which costs you fifteen millions a year, and leaves at this instant England without defence.

5. While you think of these things, let the horses go on quietly,—for the road now turns away from the city and still ascends—until, in another half hour, you will find yourself almost on a mountain summit, broken down into crags to the eastward, and grey—or grey-purple—with the lurid but lovely blue of the field Eryngium.[2] From this brow you may see entire Verona, and all the plain between Alp and Apennine; and so, if you please, we will find a place where the rocks are mossy, and sit down, and consider a little what this landscape of all the landscapes in the world has specially to say to us.

6. And, first, let us note exactly where we are. We may now see easily that we are on the point of a vast promontory or spur about ten miles long, thrown out from the Alps; and of which the last rock dies into the plain, exactly at that eastern gate of Verona out of which we came to climb it. Now this promontory is one of the sides of the great gate out of Germany into Italy, through which the Goths always entered: cloven up to Innspruck by the Inn; and down to Verona by the Adige. And by this gate not

[1] [Sammicheli, the father of the science of modern fortification, was born at Verona in 1484. A circular bastion (called the Bastione Boccare) had already been built there; he subsequently introduced—in the Bastione della Maddalena there—the triangular and pentangular bastion.]

[2] [Commonly known as "sea holly."]

Digitized by Google

only the Gothic armies came, but after the Italian nation is formed, the current of northern life enters still into its heart through the mountain artery, as constantly and strongly as the cold waves of the Adige itself.

Now the porch of it here towards Italy is literally like a scene in the *Arabian Nights*. It reminds one precisely of some such passage as—"And at the end of the plain the prince came to a gate between two mountains; and the mountains were mixed of marble and brass." That is here literally true. The rock of this promontory on which we are seated hardens as we trace it back to the Alps, first into a limestone having knots of splendid brown jasper in it, as our chalk has flints, and in a few miles more into true marble, coloured by iron into a glowing orange, or pale warm red—the peach-blossom marble, of which Verona is chiefly built:[1] and then as you advance farther into the hills, into variegated marbles, so rich and grotesque in their veinings, and so fancifully lending themselves to decoration, that this last time of my stay at Verona I was quite seriously impeded in my examinations of sculpture, and disturbed in what—at the age of 51—may yet be left in me of poetical sentiment, by involuntary misgivings whether the churches were real churches, or only museums of practical geology in connexion with that of Jermyn Street.[2]

7. Now, understand that you are seated upon this mountain promontory, which at its base has been the beginning of lovely building, and at its extremity the beginning of accurate science. I want you to look out from it again upon the landscape at its feet.

There is, first, this blue Lombardic plain, wide as the sea; and in the very centre of it, at about twelve miles away from you, a little cluster of domes and towers, with a gleam of white water round them. That is *Mantua*.

[1] [On the peach-coloured marble of Verona, compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 159.]
[2] [The Museum of Practical Geology, in connexion with the Government School of Mines, was erected in 1850 in Jermyn Street.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Allen & Co Sc

The Market Place, Verona

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Look beyond its fretted outline, and you will see that in that direction the plain, elsewhere boundless, is ended by undulation of soft hills. Those are the Apennines above *Parma*. Then look to the left, and just beyond the roots of the Alps, you will see the cluster of the cones of the Euganean hills, and the space at their feet in which rests *Padua*, and the gleam of horizon beyond them in which rests *Venice*. Look, then, north-eastward, and, touched into a crown of strangé rubies as the sun descends, there is the snowy cluster of the Alps of Friuli.

8. Then turn to the north-west, and under the sunset itself you will see the Adige flow from its enchanted porch of marble, and in one strong and almost straight stream, blanched always bright by its swiftness, reflecting on its eddies neither bank nor cloud but only light, stretch itself along among the vines, to the Verona lying at your feet: there first it passes the garden walls of the Church of St. Zeno, then under the battlements of the great bridge of the Scaligers, then passes away out of sight behind the hill on which, though among ghastly modern buildings, here and there you may still trace a grey fragment of tower and wall—the remnants of the palace of Theodoric of Verona—Dietrich of Bern.[1]

9. Now, I do not think that there is any other rock in all the world, from which the places, and monuments, of so complex and deep a fragment of the history of its ages can be visible, as from this piece of crag, with its blue and prickly weeds. For you have thus beneath you at once, the birthplaces of Virgil and of Livy,[2] the homes of Dante

[1] [The modern barracks (Castello S. Pietro) are on the site of the ancient castle (of which ruins are still visible) of the Ostrogoth Theodoric the Great (died 526), the "Dietrich of Bern" (*i.e.*, Verona) of the Niebelungen Lied: see "The School of Florence," § 13 (Vol. XX.).]

[2] [Virgil at Mantua, and Livy at Padua. Dante possessed a villa near Verona (Gargagnano), where he is said to have composed the *Purgatorio;* Petrarch lived at Arqua amongst the Euganean Hills; and the so-called "Tomb of Juliet" is shown at Verona: compare what Ruskin says in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 20, of the richness of association in the country between Verona and Venice. Mantegna was born at Vicenza; Titian at Cadore, behind "the Alps of Friuli" (§ 7); Correggio at the place of that name, between Mantua and Reggio.]

Digitized by Google

and Petrarch, and the source of the most sweet and pathetic inspiration to your own Shakespeare; the spot where the civilization of the Gothic kingdoms was founded on the throne of Theodoric, and where whatever was strongest in the Italian race redeemed itself into life by its league against Barbarossa. You have the cradle of natural science and medicine in the schools of Padua; the central light of Italian chivalry in the power of the Scaligers; the chief stain of Italian cruelty, in that of Ezzelin;[1] and, lastly, the birthplace of the highest art; for among these hills, or by this very Adige bank, were born Mantegna, Titian, Correggio, and Veronese.

10. Now, I hope some day to trace out a few threads of this history, especially that of the earlier times, unspeakably full of pathetic interest:[2] there are no tragedies like the tragedies of Verona under the Gothic and Lombard Kings. To-night, I shall keep to my poor old work, only among the Stones of Verona, instead of Venice. I cannot disentangle for you even the simplest of the inlaid threads of this tapestry of the fates of men that here lies beneath us, infinite like the purple of the great valley and the greater hills. But I can now mass it out for you in its broad design of light and darkness,—better, at least, than I was able to do twenty years ago, when I first tried to interpret the story of these cities of the plain.

11. You will find I have divided the drawings from Verona placed here to-night, into three separate series.[3] The first, of so-called Lombard architecture; the second, of Gothic; the third, of the early period of Revival, with its connected painting.

The first period—Lombard—extends to the end of the twelfth century; and is the expression of the introduction of Christianity into barbaric minds. Now, whatever

[1] [See *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 112 (Vol. XII. p. 137).]
[2] [Ruskin partly carried out this intention in his lecture on "The School of Florence," §§ 13 *seq.* (see Vol. XX.).]
[3] [See the headings in the Catalogue, below, pp. 449, 451, 457.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

J. Ruskin. Allen & Co. Sc.

Study of a Capital, Verona

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

we may think, a savage cannot be made a Christian at once; and this whole Lombardic period is not one of *Christianity*, but of Christianization.

You have next the Gothic period, Dante's time, lasting about two hundred years—from 1200 to 1400—(Dante beginning his poem exactly in the midst of it, in 1300). This is the period of vital Christianity, and of the development of the laws of chivalry, and forms of imagination, which are founded on Christianity.

Thirdly, you have the first period of the Revival in which the arts of Greece, and some of its religion, return, and join themselves to Christianity. They do not take away the sincerity of our religion, nor even its earnestness; but they make it poetical instead of practical.

The fourth period is that in which even this poetical Christianity expires. The arts become devoted to the pursuit of pleasure: and in that they perish, except where they are saved by a healthy naturalism, or domesticity.

But there is so much of good and evil in this period, including modern days,—so much truth in what Carlyle has said,[1] that we are saturated with hypocrisy,—and yet so much strength and life in the substance that is thus saturated,—that I will venture no positive general statement to you this evening.

I have only put one photograph from Raphael next to one from John Bellini,[2] to show you, in sharp contrast, the mediæval Christianity of which John Bellini, and the modern Christianity of which Raphael, are severally the most powerful interpreters.

12. (I.) Let me characterize these periods more distinctly.

The Lombardic period, that of Christianization, is one of savage but noble life gradually subjected to law. It is the forming of meh, not out of clay, but out of splendid

[1] [See, e.g., *Life of Sterling*, ch. xv.: "the old spiritual highways and recognized paths to the Eternal, now all torn up and flung in heaps, submerged in unutterable boiling mud-oceans of Hypocrisy."]

[2] [The "Madonna della Seggiola" of Raphael, and a Madonna of Bellini. No. 50 in the Catalogue; below, p. 458.]

Digitized by Google

wild beasts, often as gentle as they are wild, but of unconquered animal nature. And all art of that date, in all countries, including our own Norman especially, is, in the inner heart of it, the subjection of savage or terrible, or wilful and wandering life, to a dominant law. It is government and conquest of fearful dreams. There is in it as yet no germ of true hope; only the conquest of evil, and the waking from darkness and terror.

The literature of it, as in Greece, is far in advance of art,[1] and is already full of the most tender and impassioned beauty, while the art is still grotesque and dreadful; but however wild, it is supreme above all others by its expression of governing law, and here at Verona is the very centre and utmost reach of that expression. I know nothing in architecture at once so exquisite, and so wild, and so strange, in the expression of self-conquest achieved almost in a dream.

13. For, observe, these barbaric races, educated in violence, chiefly in war and in hunting, cannot feel or see clearly, as they are gradually civilized, whether this element in which they have been brought up is evil or not. They *must* be good soldiers, and hunters,—that is their life; yet they know now that killing is evil, and they must not expect any more to find wild beasts to hunt in heaven. They have been trained by pain, by violence, by hunger and cold. They know there is a good in these things as well as an evil; they are perpetually hesitating between the one and other thought of them. But one thing is clear to them,—that killing and hunting, and every form of misery, of pleasure, and of passion, must somehow at last be subdued by law, which shall bring good out of it all, and which they feel more and more constraining them every hour.

14. Now if, with this sympathy, you look at their dragon and wild beast decoration,[2] you will find that it now

[1] [Compare *Aratra Pentelici*, § 78.]
[2] [See Nos. 4 to 7 in the Catalogue (pp. 449, 450); and compare, again, "The School of Florence," § 22 (Vol. XX.).]

Digitized by Google

tells you about these Lombards far more than they could know of themselves. You may smile at my saying so: but all the actions, and much more the arts, of men tell to others, not only what the worker does not know, but what he never can know of himself, which you can only recognize by being in an element more advanced and wider than his.

And then also remember, even in deliberate symbolism, the question is always, as I have several times lately had to urge[1]—not what a symbol meant first, or meant elsewhere—but what it means now, and means here. Now this dragon symbol of the Lombards is used of course all over the world: it means good here, and evil there; sometimes means nothing, sometimes everything. You have always to ask what the man who here uses it means by it. Whatever is in his mind, that he is sure partly to express by it; nothing else than that can he at all express by it. An angel, to Angelico, is an angel indeed; to Correggio, it is a cupid; and a creature with eagle's wings and lion's limbs is, to a Hebrew, a cherub,—to a Lombard, a griffin.*

15. (II.) Now, in the second period which you may think of broadly as Dante's time, you have the highest development of Italian character and chivalry with an entirely believed Christian religion. You get therefore joy, and courtesy, and hope, and a lovely peace in death. And with these you have two fearful elements of evil. You have, first, such confidence in the virtue of the Creed, that men hate and persecute all who do not accept it. And, worse still, you find such confidence in the power of the Creed, that men not only can do anything that is wrong, and be themselves for a word of faith pardoned, but are even sure that after the wrong is done, God is sure to put it all right

* What it means, doubtful; but, on the whole, grim power conquering pain and temptation, the pillars of the church borne up by it.[2]

---

[1] [See *Queen of the Air*, §§ 1–8; above, pp. 295–303.]
[2] [Compare, yet again, "The School of Florence," § 21 (Vol. XX.).]

Digitized by Google

again for them, or even make things better than they were before.

16. Now, I need not point out to you how the spirit of persecution, as well as of vain hope founded on a creed only, is mingled in every line with the lovely moral teaching of the *Divina Commedia;* nor need I point out to you how, between the persecution of other people's creeds, and the absolution of one's own crimes, all Christian error is concluded.

But I will give you two most singular instances of both feelings, out of this Verona at our feet; for the power of the city in Italy rose and fell in the two centuries of the Christian period.

17. The founder of the power of the Scalas was Mastino,[1] a simple citizen, chosen first to be Podestà, and then Captain of Verona after the fall of Ezzelin.

He had been elected for his justice and sagacity, and he perished by his gentleness; being assassinated in private vengeance for his endeavour to end a family feud without blood. All his policy was wise and peaceful, and it is only as part of the fulfilment of his kindly purposes that we have this fact recorded of the civil powers underneath him.

"And because by the continuance of wars and civil discords, many great abuses and heresies had sprung up in the Veronese territory, it was determined in the Council to extirpate that bad root. And so in the year 1276, by command of the citizens in authority, the Bishop of Verona, and Brother Philip Bononcorsi, the Inquisitor of Mantua, with Master Pinamonte, the father of the said Inquisitor, and Podestà of Verona; and finally Master Albert della Scala, the brother and vicegerent of Master Mastino the Captain; went with a troop to Sirmione, Peninsula of the Lago di Garda, and proceeded in a brisk manner—*gagliardamente*—against these said heretics and

[1] [Mastino I. della Scala ruled from 1260 to 1277, Ezzelino da Romano having died in 1259; for other references to the latter, see Vol. VII. p. 347, Vol. XII. p. 137, Vol. XIV. p. 243.]

Digitized by Google

bad Christians, as well of Sirmione as of the surrounding villages and castles, in which they found a good hundred—*ben cento*, including both men and women, who were greatly faultful and incorrigible, and they had them all burned in the said place for an example to the others,—*Si fecero tutti in detto luogo abbrucciare per esempio degli altri.*"[1]

18. That, then, is the spirit in which the Gothic power is founded. And observe, the reason of its intense bitterness is, among many others, this chiefly—the fear of the disturbance of its hope after death.

And it is this hope, and the continual dwelling upon the conquest of death, and the rewards of faith, which distinctly mark the Christian time. The Lombard architecture, observe, expresses the triumph of law over passion; the Christian, that of hope over sorrow.

And the loveliness of building which was before given to churches only, now is given to tombs, not merely as shrines of saints, but as the dwelling-places of those who have fallen asleep. Hence it is that the tomb-buildings of Verona are permitted to stand among its palaces, and, side by side, the presence chambers of the living and the dead.

19. I have already had occasion to dwell enough on the beauty of this feeling.[2] I must now mark also the danger of its corruption.

The most splendid of the tombs, of which you will find various drawings in the next room, was built—as you all probably know—by Can Signorio della Scala, a prince who had in every way benefited and cared for the city; and among other minor gifts, bestowed on it one by which it profits to this day, the fountain of the great square. He was deeply religious; meditated constantly on his death,

[1] [Ruskin, as was his habit in visiting cities, went to the early local histories. This is a quotation from the earliest history of the Scaligers—*Le Historie e Fatti de Veronesi*, by Messer Torello Sarayna, Verona, 1542, p. 19. Compare *Dell' Istorie della Citta di Verona* (Venice, 1544), by Girolamo dalla Corte, vol. ii. pp. 22–23.]

[2] [See *Seven Lamps*, Vol. VIII. pp. 246–247.]

Digitized by Google

and believed that he should be entirely happy in the next world, if only he were assured of the prosperity and secure reign of his children in this one.

Accordingly, "on the fourteenth day of September, 1375, knowing that his death drew near, he called to him his two dear friends, Master Guglielmo Bevilacqua and Master Tommaso de' Perigrini, with some of the first people of the city; and then he made come into his sight Bartolommeo and Antonio his sons, one fifteen years old and the other thirteen, and in the presence of these gentlemen he said to them, 'My sons, the love that I bear you is so great that by cause of it I fear I shall suffer some punishment after I am dead, wishing to leave you altogether lords; and if in this I have committed sin, may the Lord our God give me the punishment of it, which willingly I shall suffer, so that you may remain in prosperity. I am now leaving you a most fair state, noble and faithful; if you will be good and temperate, you will enjoy it a long time in stability; but if, on the contrary, you become vile, foolish, and discordant, it will be mutable and brief. Wherefore I command you as your lord, and pray you as a tender father, that you would be obedient to these gentlemen whom I have always loved, and under whose government and guardianship I leave you; and above the others I assign to you Master Gugliemo Builacqua here for a father in my room, and Master Tommasso Peregrini for tutor; and if you use their counsels, I have no doubt of your security, for I leave you besides a state enriched with every good; and above all things I recommend to you justice, and the fear of the Highest God, and the care of your people, to whom, if you are good and just and pitiful lords, they will be faithful to you.' Whereupon he kept silence, not being able to speak more for abundance of tears."[1]

20. The scene is a very touching one; but the fault of which Can Signorio thus prepared himself to bear the punishment, had severe penalty, even in the world he left.

[1] [Sarayna, p. 40 (and compare Corte, vol. ii. pp. 275–276).]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Allen & Co. Sc

Upper Part of the Tomb of Can Signorio, Verona

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Tomb of Can Grande, Verona.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

It was the murder of his two brothers; the second of whom he sent orders to kill in prison, from this very deathbed, after he had dismissed his children. And the end of all was, that one of these children murdered the other, and was driven himself from the throne—so ending the dynasty of the Scalas.

21. Now of course your first impulse—when you know the whole story—is to think the man's entire character assumed. It was *not* assumed; and the great lesson we have to learn from him is the boundless possibility of self-deception in religious bigotry, especially in Christian bigotry: for Christianity is a religion of mercy and truth, and when it is corrupt it corrupts into its reverse; and there is no cruelty like the cruelty of Christians, and no fallacy like their falsehood. We fancy we are so very sincere ourselves; but the Christian avarice of London commits more murders in a day, than the worst Christian ambition of the Scalas did in their two centuries of power at Verona.

22. Well, we won't end the Gothic time with Can Signorio. Here is the tomb of that pious person:[1]—but here is the tomb of a good knight and true,[2] living, I think, the busiest and the brightest life that you can find in the annals of chivalry.

His contemporary, Castruccio Castracani,[3] whose sword was given to the present King of Italy at Lucca, was as brave and energetic, but yet selfish and cold in temper compared to the Great Dog of the Scalas—Cane Francesco, —*Belligero terribile, et robusto.*[4]

First he won his wife, Joanna, by a *coup de main;* he fell in love with her when she was a girl, in Rome; then, she was going to be sent into Scotland to be married;

[1] [No. 30 in the Catalogue; below, p. 455. The upper part of the tomb is Plate XXII. here.]

[2] [Can Grande: see Plate XXIII. here, and in the Catalogue, Nos. 21 and 22 (below, p. 454).]

[3] [For Castruccio Castracani, Duke of Lucca, see Vol. XII. pp. 224–225. For another reference to the gift of his sword by the people of Lucca to King Victor Emanuel, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 18, where Ruskin mentions Mrs. Browning's poem, "The Sword of Castruccio Castracani," upon the incident.]

[4] [Sarayna, p. 14.]

Digitized by Google

but she had to go through Verona, to the Adige gate. So Can Grande pounced upon her; declared she was much too precious a gem—*preziosa gemma*—to be sent to Scotland, and—she went no farther. Then he fortified, as I told you, Verona against the Germans; dug the great moat out of its rocks; built its wall and towers; established his court of royal and thoughtful hospitality; became the chief Ghibelline captain of Lombardy, and the receiver of noble exiles from all other states; possessed himself by hard fighting of Vicenza also; then of Padua; then, either by strength or subtlety, of Feltre,—Belluno,—Bassano; and died at 37,—of eating apples when he was too hot,—in the year 1329.

23. (III.) And now, thirdly, we come to the period when classical literature and art were again known in Italy, and the painters and sculptors, who had been gaining steadily in power for two hundred years,—power not of practice merely, but of race also,—with every circumstance in their favour around them, received their finally perfect instruction both in geometrical science, in that of materials, and in the anatomy and action of the human body. Also, the people about them,—the models of their work,—had been perfected in personal beauty by chivalric war; in imagination, by a transcendental philosophy; in practical intellect, by stern struggle for civic law; and by commerce, not in falsely-made, or vile, or unclean things, but in lovely things, beautifully and honestly made. And now, therefore, you get out of all the world's long history since it was peopled by men till now—you get just fifty years of perfect work. Perfect. It is a strong word. It is also a *true* one. The doing of these fifty years is unaccusably Right, as art. What its sentiment may be—whether too great or too little—whether superficial or sincere, is another question; but as artists' work, it admits no conception of anything better. It is true that in the following age, founded on the absolutely stern rectitude of this, there came a phase of gigantic power, and of exquisite ease and felicity, which possess an awe and a charm of

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Allen & Co. Sc.

Details from the Tomb of Can Grande, Verona

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

their own. They are just as insuperable, and they are more inimitable, than the work of the perfect School. But they are not *perfect*. It is a most subtle question whether the greater manifestation of power in them indicate greater inherent power or not.

24. I am not able—no man, unless one of their equals, would be able—to tell you, whether there is really more strength in Gainsborough, who can draw a mouth with one undulatory sweep of his pencil—or in Carpaccio, who will take half-an-hour at least to do apparently little more. But I can tell you positively that Carpaccio's work is faultless.[1] When done, it is a mouth; and a perfect one; whereas Gainsborough's is only a lovely streak of vermilion, which looks like a mouth a little way off.

25. Now it is very difficult to find a name for this wonderful fifty years' space. You cannot call it classical, for its style differs in all kinds of ways from the time antique. Still less can you call it Christian, for its direct inspiration is entirely Heathen. You cannot name it from any king; for no king at this time was worthy of the age; and you cannot name it from any one Art Master, for twenty masters were equally worthy of it at once. So I shall call it simply the Age of the Masters.[2] Fifty years, mind you. I cannot name half their great workmen for you, but these are the greatest of them—Luini, Leonardo, John Bellini, Vettor Carpaccio, Andrea Mantegna, Andrea Verrocchio, Cima da Conegliano, Perugino, and in date—though only in his earlier life belonging to the school—Raphael. But you may best recollect the great fifty years as the prime of the life of three men:—John Bellini, born 1426, died at 90, in 1516; Mantegna, born 1430, died at 76, in 1506; and Vettor Carpaccio,—the date of his birth is unknown, but he died about 1522.

26. Now, observe, the object of these masters is wholly different from that of the former school. The central

[1] [For Ruskin's "discovery" of Carpaccio in 1869, see Vol. IV. p. 356 *n.*]
[2] [Compare *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, §§ 8–13.]

Digitized by Google

Gothic men always want chiefly to impress you with the facts of their subject; but the masters of this finished time desire only to make everything dainty, delightful, and perfect. We have not many pictures of the class in England, but several have been of late added to the National Gallery;[1] and the Perugino there, especially the compartment with Raphael and Tobit, and the little St. Jerome by John Bellini, will perfectly show you this main character—pictorial perfectness and deliciousness—sought before everything else. You will find, if you look into that St. Jerome, that everything in it is exquisite, complete, and pure; there is not a particle of dust in the cupboards nor of cloud in the air; the wooden shutters are dainty, the candlesticks are dainty, the saint's scarlet hat is dainty, and its violet tassel, and its riband, and his blue cloak, and his spare pair of shoes, and his little brown partridge;—it is all a perfect quintessence of innocent luxury—absolute delight, without one drawback in it, nor taint of the Devil anywhere.

I don't quite know another picture like it except a Nativity by Luini belonging to the present Count Borromeo;[2] —it is a picture about the same size, painted rather more slightly than Luini's usual work in oil, and with a felicity of heart that wholly refuses to see anything grave in this Nativity; it is a bright fable of perfect joy, and heaven come down to earth; the Madonna is not worshipping the child, but merely holding it and gazing at it, her face lost in one sweet satisfied rapture of mere love. She is going to lay it in the manger,—and because the straw is out of order, two exquisite little cherubs with ruby wings are shaking it up.

[1] [The date was 1869–1870, when among other recent acquisitions were the "Raphael and Tobias" (School of Verrocchio), No. 781; and "St. Anthony and St. George" by Vittore Pisano, No. 776. The Perugino is No. 288 (for other references to it, see Vol. XV. p. 170 *n.*); the "St. Jerome" (now ascribed to Catena) is No. 694.]

[2] [At that time Count Giberto Borromeo, whose acquaintance Ruskin made at Venice in 1869, and whom he afterwards visited at Milan. The picture described is in the Museo Borromeo at Milan.]

Digitized by Google

27. Well; for other pictures of this class, there were two exquisite ones in the Winter Academy,—a little Narcissus by Luini, and the Peter Martyr by John Bellini;[1] the last very valuable, because you saw in a moment the main characteristic of the school,—that it mattered not in the least to John, and that he doesn't expect it to matter to you, whether people are martyred or not, so long as one can make a pretty grey of their gowns, and a nice white of their sleeves, and infinite decoration of forest leaves behind, and a divine picture at last out of all. Everything in the world was done and made only that it might be rightly painted—that is the true master's creed.[2]

28. I used to think all this very wrong once[3] and that it meant general falseness and hardness of heart, and so on. It means nothing of the kind. It means only that one's whole soul is put into one's work; and that the entire soul so spent is healthy and happy, and cannot vex itself with questions, cares, or pains.

29. And now I have only a few words more to say about a very different subject.

I asked you to come to-night that I might talk to you about Verona and its rivers. There is but one at Verona; nevertheless, Dante connects its name with that of the Po, when he says of the whole of Lombardy—

> "In sul Paese, che Adige e Pò riga,
> Solea valore e cortesia trovarsi,
> Prima che Federigo avesse briga."[4]

I want to speak for a minute or two about those great rivers; because in the efforts that are now being made to

[1] [The Old Masters Exhibition of 1870 contained No. 113, "Narcissus" by Luini (lent by Lady Taunton), and No. 146, "Peter Martyr" by Bellini (lent by Lady Eastlake). The latter picture was afterwards presented to the National Gallery (No. 812); for other references to it, see, in Vol. XXI., *Lectures on Landscape*, §§ 11, 77, 94, and *The Relation of Michael Angelo and Tintoret*, § 13.]

[2] [Compare the contrast drawn in the lecture on "Modern Art" between "constant" and "dramatic" art; above, p. 203.]

[3] [See, for instance, such a passage as that in *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 122 (Vol. XII. p. 145).]

[4] [*Purgatorio*, xvi. 115–117; compare *Val d'Arno*, §§ 2, 3, where the passage is quoted and commented upon.]

Digitized by Google

restore some of its commerce to Venice,[1] precisely the same questions are being debated which, again and again, ever since Venice was a city, have put her senate at pause—namely, how to hold in check the continually advancing morass formed by the silt brought down by the Alpine rivers.

80. Is it not strange that, for at least six hundred years, the Venetians have been contending with those great rivers—at their *mouths*, that is to say, where their strength has become wholly irresistible; and never once thought of contending with them at their sources, where their infinitely separated streamlets might be—and are meant by heaven to be—ruled, as easily as children?[2] And observe how sternly, how constantly, the place where they are to be governed is marked by the mischief done by their liberty. Consider what the advance of the delta of the Po in the Adriatic signifies among the Alps. The evil of the delta itself, however great, is as nothing in comparison of the mischief which is in its origin. The gradual destruction of the harbourage of Venice, the endless cost of delaying it, the malaria of the whole coast down to Ravenna, nay, the raising of the bed of the Po, to the imperilling of all Lombardy, are but secondary evils. Every acre of that increasing delta means *the devastation of part of an Alpine valley, and the loss of so much fruitful soil and ministering rain.* Some of you now present must have passed this year through the valleys of the Toccia and Ticino. You know, therefore, the devastation that was caused there, as well as in the valley of the Rhone, by the great floods of 1868, and that ten years of labour, even if the peasantry had still the heart for labour, cannot redeem those districts into fertility. What you have there seen on a vast

[1] [The deepening of the "ports" or deep channel entrances through the *lidi* and other improvements have, since 1870, restored considerable commercial prosperity to Venice, which is now second only to Trieste among the seaports of the Adriatic. The progress may be traced in the Consular Reports issued by the British Foreign Office; for an account of the lagoons and the channels, with map, see H. F. Brown's *Life on the Lagoons.*]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's letters given in the Introduction; above, p. lvi.]

Digitized by Google

scale, takes place to a certain extent during every summer thunderstorm, and from the ruin of some portion of fruitful land, the dust descends to increase the marshes of the Po.

31. But observe farther,—whether fed by sudden melting of snow, or by storm, every destructive rise of the Italian rivers signifies the loss of so much power of irrigation on the south side of the Alps. You must all well know the look of their chain, seen from Milan or Turin late in summer,—how little snow is left, except on Monte Rosa; how vast a territory of brown mountain-side, heated and barren, without rocks, yet without forest. There is in that brown-purple zone, and along the flanks of every valley that divides it, another Lombardy of cultivable land; and every drift of rain that swells the mountain torrents, if it were caught where it falls, is more truly rain of gold than fell in the tower of Danaë.[1] But we seek gold beneath the rocks; and we will not so much as make a trench along the hillside to catch it when it falls from heaven; and where, if not so caught, it changes into a frantic monster, first ravaging hamlet and field in fury, and then sinking, along the shores of Venice, into poisoned sleep. Think what that belt of the Alps might be—up to four thousand feet above the plain—if the system of terraced irrigation, which even half-savage nations discovered and practised long ago, in China and in Borneo, and by which our own engineers have subdued districts of farthest India, were but in part also practised here,—here, in the oldest and proudest centre of European arts, where Leonardo da Vinci—master among the masters—first discovered the laws of the coiling clouds and wandering streams,[2] so that to this day his engineering remains unbettered by modern science;[3] and yet in this centre

[1] [For the legend of Danaë, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. (Vol. VII. pp. 184–185 *n.*).]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's note on No. 17 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue (above, p. 272).]

[3] [Leonardo's work as an engineer and inventor is the subject of an interesting chapter in M. Eugène Muntz's *Leonardo da Vinci: Artist, Thinker, and Man of Science*, vol. ii. pp. 45 *seq.*]

Digitized by Google

of all human achievements of genius, no thought has been taken to receive with sacred art these great gifts of quiet snow and flying rain. Think, I repeat, what that south slope of the Alps might be; one paradise of lovely pasture and avenued forest of chestnut and blossomed trees, and cascades, docile and innocent as infants, laughing all summer long from crag to crag and pool to pool, and the Adige and the Po, the Dora and the Ticino, no more defiled, no more alternating between fierce flood and venomous languor, but in calm, clear currents, bearing ships to every city, and health to every field of all that azure plain of Lombard Italy.

32. Now I know that you come to the Royal Institution that you may pass, if it may be, a pleasant evening, and that I have no right to tease you with economical or philanthropical projects:—but thinking of you now as indulgent friends, with whom I am grateful to be allowed to begin, as you know I first in public begin to-day, work involving no small responsibility,[1] you will not think it wrong in me to tell you that it has now become a most grave object with me to get some of the great pictures of the Italian schools into England, and that I think at this time, with good help, it might be contrived. Farther, without in the least urging my plans impatiently on any one else, I know thoroughly that this which I have said *should* be done for the Italian rivers—*can* be done, and that no method of employment of our idle able-bodied labourers would in the end be more remunerative, or in the beginnings of it more healthful and every way beneficial, than with the concurrence of the Italian and Swiss governments, setting them to redeem the valleys of the Ticino and the Rhone. And I pray you to think of this; for I tell you truly,—you who love Italy, that both her passions and her mountain streams are noble; but that her happiness depends, not on the Liberties, but the right *Government* of both.

[1] [The work of the Slade Professorship at Oxford.]

Digitized by Google

Drawings and Photographs, illustrative of the Architecture of Verona, shown at the Royal Institution, Feb. 4th, 1870

SECTION I. (Nos. 1 to 7).—LOMBARD

1. Porch of the Church of St. Zeno. (Photograph.)

   Of the twelfth century.[1]

2. Porch of the South Entrance of the Duomo.

   Probably of the tenth or eleventh century, and highly remarkable for the wildness of its grotesque or monstrous sculpture, which has been most carefully rendered by the draughtsman, Mr. Bunney.

   It will save space to note that the sketches by my two most skilful and patient helpers, Mr. A. Burgess and Mr. Bunney, will be respectively marked (*A.*) and (*B.*), and my own (*R.*).

3. Porch of the Western Entrance of the Duomo. (Photograph.)

   Later in date—but still of twelfth or very early thirteenth century.

   Details of it are given in the next drawings.

4. Griffin (I keep the intelligible old English spelling) sustaining the Pillar on the North Side of the Porch seen in No. 3. (*R.*)[2]

   Painted last summer.

   I engraved his head and breast, seen from the other side, in the plate of "True and False Griffins," in *Modern Painters*. Only the back of the head and neck of the small dragon he holds in his fore-claws can be seen from this side.

[1] [This photograph was afterwards placed in the Ruskin Art Collection at Oxford (Reference Series, No. 69). It is reproduced as Plate I. in Vol. XX. (*Aratra Pentelici*).]

[2] [For this subject, see § 14 of the lecture (above, p. 437). The drawing is No. 82 in the Educational Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The engraving of the griffin is in Vol. V. p. 140. The earlier sketch of the griffin (from which, probably, the engraving was prepared) was No. 6 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue: see above, p. 270. Ruskin refers to his drawing of 1869 in a letter to his mother of June 22: see the Introduction (above, p. li.).]

Digitized by Google

5. Capital of the Pillar sustained by the Griffin, of which the Base is seen in No. 4. (*A.*)

First-rate sculpture of the time, and admirably drawn.

6. Portion of Decorative Lombardic Moulding from the South Side of the Duomo. (*A.*)

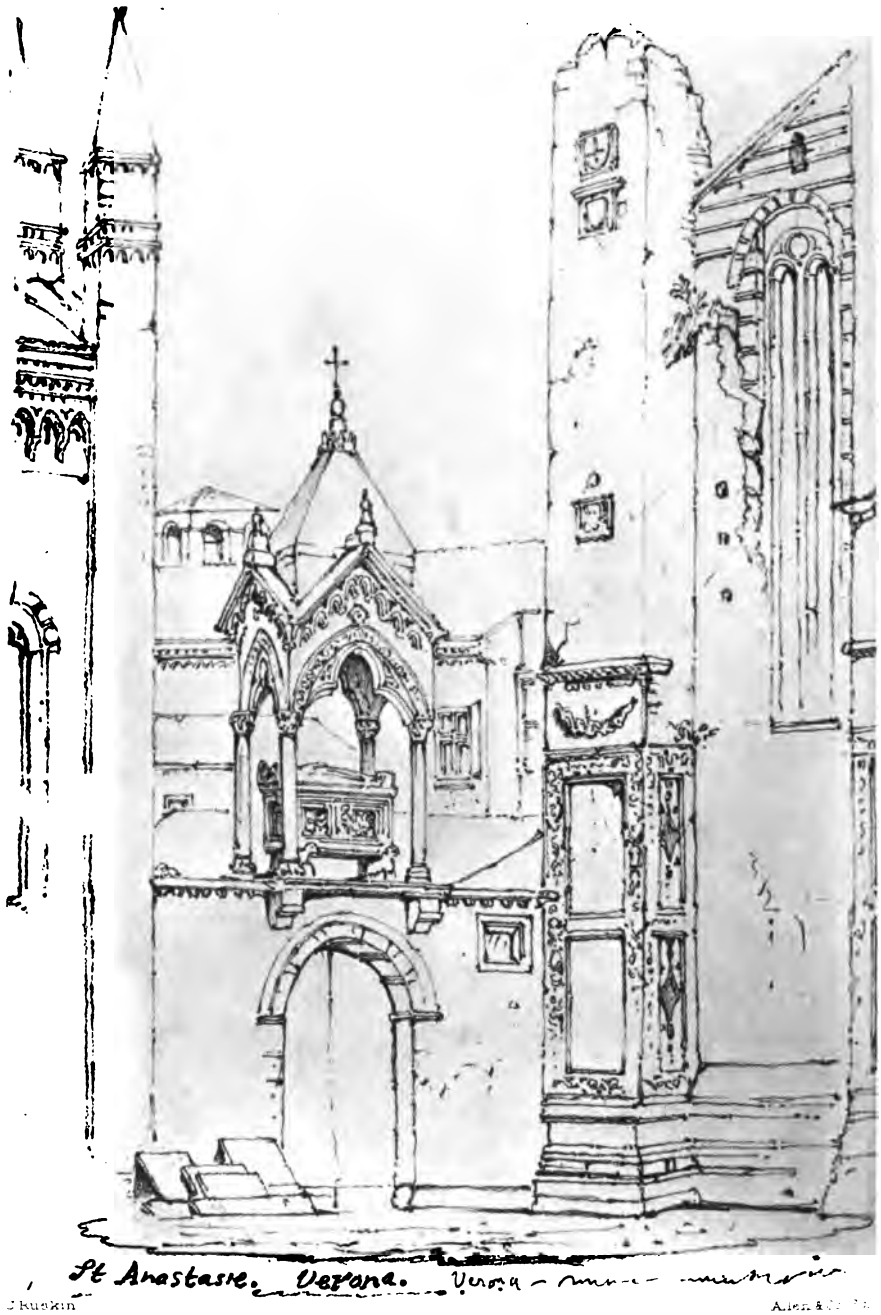
Showing the peculiar writhing of the branched tracery with a serpentine flexure—altogether different from the springing lines of Gothic ornament. It would be almost impossible to draw this better; it is much more like the real thing than a cast would be.

7. Lion, with Dragon in its Claws, of Lombardic Sculpture (now built into a wall at Venice); above it, Head of one of the Dogs which support the Tomb of Can Grande, at Verona. (*R.*)

The lion, in its emaciated strength, and the serpent, with its vital writhe and deadly reverted bite, are both characteristic of the finest Lombard work. The dog's head is fourteenth-century Gothic—a masterpiece of broad, subtle, easy sculpture, getting expression with every touch, and never losing the least undulation of surface, while it utterly disdains the mere imitation of hair, or attainment of effect by deep cutting.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



The Castelbarco Tomb, Verona
(1835)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

SECTION II. (Nos. 8 to 38).—GOTHIC

8. North Porch of the Church of St. Fermo. Thirteenth century. (*B.*)

Mr. Bunney's drawing is so faithful and careful as almost to enable the spectator to imagine himself on the spot. The details of this porch are among the most interesting in the Gothic of Italy,[1] but I was obliged, last year, to be content with this general view, taken in terror of the whole being "restored"; and with the two following drawings.

9. Base of the Central Pillar. North Porch, St. Fermo. (*B.*)

In facsimile, as nearly as possible, and of the real size, to show the perpetual variety in the touch; and in the disposition and size of the masses.

10. Shaft-Capitals of the Interior Arch of the North Porch, St. Fermo. (*B.*)

Contrived so that, while appearing symmetrical, and even monotonous, not one lobe of any of the leaves shall be like another. Quite superb in the original, but grievously difficult to draw, and losing, in this sketch, much of their grace.

11. Western Door of the Church of St. Anastasia, with the Tomb of the Count of Castelbarco on the Left, over the Arch. (Photograph.)[2]

In the door, its central pillar, carved lintels and encompassing large pointed arch, with its deep mouldings and flanking shafts, are of the finest Veronese thirteenth-century work. The two minor pointed arches are of the fourteenth century. The flanking pilasters, with double panels and garlands above, are the beginning of a façade intended to have been erected in the fifteenth century.

[1] [This drawing now hangs in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford. For a note on the porch, see Ruskin's letter to his mother of June 25; Introduction, p. lii.]

[2] [Compare Ruskin's early drawing: Plate XXV. here.]

Digitized by Google

The Count of Castelbarco, the Chancellor of Can Grande della Scala, died about the year 1330, and his tomb cannot be much later in date.

The details of this group of buildings are illustrated under the numbers next in series.

12. Pillars and Lintels of the Western Door of St. Anastasia. (Photograph.)

The sculpture of the lintel is first notable for its concise and intense story of the Life of Christ.

1. The Annunciation. (Both Virgin and Angel kneeling.)
2. The Nativity.
3. The Epiphany. (Chosen as a sign of life giver to the Gentiles.)
4. Christ bearing His Cross. (Chosen as a sign of His personal life in its entirety.)
5. The Crucifixion.
6. The Resurrection.

Secondly. As sculpture, this lintel shows all the principal features of the characteristic thirteenth-century design of Verona.

Diminutive and stunted figures; the heads ugly in features, stern in expression; but the drapery exquisitely disposed in minute but not deep-cut folds.

13. The Angels on the Left Hand of the Subject of the Resurrection in No. 12. (*A.*)

Drawn of its actual size, excellently.

The appearance of fusion and softness in the contours is not caused by time, but is intentional, and reached by great skill in the sculptor, faithfully rendered in the drawing.

14. Sketch of the Capital of the Central Pillar in No. 12. (*R.*)

(With slight notes of a sixteenth-century bracket of a street balcony on each side.)

Drawn to show the fine curvatures and softness of treatment in Veronese sculpture of widely separated periods.

15. Unfinished Sketch of the Castelbarco Tomb, seen from one of the Windows of the Hotel of the "Two Towers." (*R.*)[1]

That inn was itself one of the palaces of the Scaligers; and the traveller should endeavour always to imagine the effect of the little Square of Sta. Anastasia when the range of its

[1] [This is possibly the drawing which was No. 218 in the Ruskin Exhibition at the Water-Colour Society, 1901.]

Digitized by Google

buildings was complete; the Castelbarco Tomb on one side, this Gothic palace on the other, and the great door of the church between. The masonry of the canopy of this tomb was so locked and dove-tailed that it stood balanced almost without cement; but of late, owing to the permission given to heavily loaded carts to pass continually under the archway, the stones were so loosened by the vibration that the old roof became unsafe, and was removed, and a fine smooth one of trimly cut white stone substituted, while I was painting the rest of the tomb, against time.[1] Hence the unfinished condition of my sketch—the last that can ever be taken of the tomb as it was built.

16. The Castelbarco Tomb, seen Laterally. (*B.*)

A most careful drawing, leaving little to be desired in realization of the subject. It is taken so near the tomb as to make the perspective awkward, but I liked this quaint view better than more distant ones.

The drawing of the archway, and of the dark grey and red masonry of the tomb is very beautiful.

17. Lion with Hind in its Claws. (*A.*)

The support of the sarcophagus, under the feet of the recumbent figure in the Castelbarco Tomb.

18. Lion with Dragon in its Claws. (*A.*)

The support of the sarcophagus at the head of the figure.[2]

19. St. Luke. (*A.*)

Sculpture of one of the four small panels at the angles of the sarcophagus in the Castelbarco Tomb. I engraved the St. Mark for the illustration of noble grotesque in the *Stones of Venice*.[3] But this drawing more perfectly renders the stern touch of the old sculptor.

20. Two of the Spurs of the Bases of the Nave Pillars in the Church of St. Anastasia. (*A.*)

Of the real size. Not generally seen in the darkness of the Church, and very fine in their rough way.

[1] [See the passages from Ruskin's letters to his mother given above; Introduction, p. xlix.]
[2] [The position of these details, again, may be seen in Plate XXV.]
[3] [Plate III. in the third volume (in this edition Vol. XI. p. 150).]

Digitized by Google

21. Tomb of Can Grande, General View. (*R.*)

Put together some time since, from photograph and sketches taken in the year 1852; and inaccurate, but useful in giving a general idea.[1]

22. Tomb of Can Grande. (*R.*)

Sketch made carefully on the spot last year. The sarcophagus unfinished; the details of it would not go into so small a space.[2]

23. The Sarcophagus and Recumbent Statue of Can Grande, Drawn Separately. (*R.*)

Sketched on the spot last year. Almost a faultless type of powerful and solemn Gothic sculpture. (Can Grande died in 1329.[3])

24. The Two Dogs. (*R.*)

The kneeling Madonna and sculpture of right-hand upper panel of the Sarcophagus of Can Grande.

The drawing of the panel is of real size, representing the Knight at the Battle of Vicenza.[4]

25. The Cornice of the Sarcophagus of Can Grande. (*A.*)

Of its real size, admirably drawn, and quite showing the softness and Correggio-like touch of its leafage, and its symmetrical formality of design, while the flow of every leaf is changeful.

26. Study of the Sarcophagus of the Tomb of Mastino II., Verona. (*R.*)

Sketched in 1852.

27. Head of the Recumbent Statue of Mastino II. (*A.*)

Beautifully drawn by Mr. Burgess.

Can Mastino II. had three daughters:—Madonna Beatrice (called afterwards "the Queen," for having "tutte le grazie che i cieli ponno concedere a femina," and always simply called by historians Lady "Reina" della Scala), Madonna Alta-luna,

[1] [No. 8 in the "Abbeville" Catalogue: see above, p. 270. For notes on Can Grande, see § 22 of the lecture (above, p. 441).]

[2] [No. 57 in the Reference Series at Oxford.]

[3] [No. 77 in the Educational Series. Plate XXIII. here is made up from the two drawings, Nos. 22 and 23 (see above, p. lxxviii.).]

[4] [These drawings were Plates 7 and 8 in "Verona, and its Rivers"; here Plate XXIV.]

Digitized by Google

and Madonna Verde. Lady Reina married Bernabó Visconti, Duke of Milan; Lady Alta-luna, Louis of Brandebourg; and Lady Verde, Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua. Their father died of "Sovereign melancholy"[1] in 1350, being forty-three years old.

28. Part of Cornice of the Sarcophagus of Mastino II. (*A.*)

One of the most beautiful Gothic cornices in Italy; its effect being obtained with extreme simplicity of execution out of two ridges of marble, each cut first into one united sharp edge all along, and then drilled through, and modelled into leaf and flower.

29. Sketch, Real Size, of the Pattern Incised and Painted on the Drapery of the Tomb of Mastino II. (*R.*)

It is worth notice for the variety of its pattern; observe, the floral fillings of spaces resemble each other, but are never the same. There is no end, when one begins drawing detail of this kind carefully. Slight as it is, the sketch gives some idea of the easy flow of the stone drapery, and of the care taken by the sculptor to paint his pattern *as if* it were bent at the apparent fold.

30. Tomb of Can Signorio della Scala.[2]

Samuel Prout's sketch on the spot (afterwards lithographed by him in his *Sketches in France and Italy*); quite admirable in feeling, composition, and concise abstraction of essential character.

The family palace of the Scaligers, in which Dante was received, is seen behind it.

31. A Single Niche and Part of the Iron-work of the Tomb of Can Signorio. (*R.*)[3]

As seen from the palace of the Scaligers; the remains of another house of the same family are seen in the little street beyond.

32. Study of Details of the Top of the Tomb of Can Signorio. (*R.*)[4]

Needing more work than I had time for, and quite spoiled by hurry; but interesting in pieces here and there; look, for instance, at the varied size and design of the crockets; and beauty of the cornices.

[1] [The quotations in this note are again from Sarayna (see above, p. 439 *n.*), p. 35.]

[2] [Reproduced in Vol. XIV. Plate 18 (facing p. 423). For notes on Can Signorio, see §§ 19–22 of the lecture (above, pp. 439–441).]

[3] [No. 60 in the Reference Series at Oxford.]

[4] [Plate 6 in "Verona, and its Rivers"; here Plate XXII.]

Digitized by Google

33. Bracket under Sarcophagus of Giovanni della Scala. (*A.*)

Characteristic of the finest later treatment of flowing foliage.

34. Part of the Front of the Ducal Palace, Venice. (*R.*)

Sketched, in 1852, by measurement, with extreme care; and showing the sharp window traceries, which are rarely seen in photographs.[1]

35. Angle of the Ducal Palace, looking Seaward from the Piazzetta. (*R.*)[2]

Sketched last year (restorations being threatened) merely to show the way in which the light is let through the edges of the angle by penetration of the upper capital, and of the foliage in the sculpture below; so that the mass may not come unbroken against the sky.

36. Photograph of the Angle Capital of Upper Arcade seen in No. 34.

Showing the pierced portions, and their treatment.

37–38. Capitals of the Upper Arcade.

Showing the grandest treatment of architectural foliage attained by the fourteenth-century masters; massive for all purposes of support; exquisitely soft and refined in contour, and faultlessly composed.[3]

[1] [From the description, this drawing would seem to be the same as No. 67 in the Reference Series at Oxford (reproduced in Vol. IV. p. 306), as in the catalogue of that collection Ruskin notes the careful drawing of the traceries, which "cannot be photographed from this point of view." But he there gives the date as 1845.]

[2] [Reproduced in Vol. X. p. 358.]

[3] [Compare *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 429).]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Piazza dei Signori, Verona
(1869)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

SECTION III.—Time of "THE MASTERS"

39. Study of the Top of the Pilaster next the Castelbarco Tomb. (*R.*)

The wild fig leaves are unfinished; for my assistant having unfortunately shown his solicitude for their preservation too energetically to some street boys who were throwing stones at them, they got a ladder, and rooted them up the same night. The purple and fine-grained white marbles of the pilaster are entirely uninjured in surface by three hundred years' exposure. The coarse white marble above has mouldered, and is grey with lichens.

40. Study of the Base of the same Pilaster, and Connected Façade. (*R.*)[1]

Showing the effect of differently coloured marbles arranged in carefully unequal masses.

41. Interior Court of the Ducal Palace of Venice, with Giant's Stair. (*R.*)[2]

Sketched in 1841, and perhaps giving some characters which more finished drawing would lose.

42. The Piazza d'Erbe, Verona. (*R.*)[3]

Sketched in 1841, showing general effect and pretty grouping of the later Veronese buildings..

43. Piazza de' Signori, Verona. (*R.*)[4]

Sketched last year. Note the bill advertising Victor Hugo's *Homme qui rit,* pasted on the wall of the palace.

The great tower is of the Gothic time. Note its noble sweep of delicately ascending curves sloped inwards.

[1] [A brilliant sketch in water-colour; now No. 68 in the Reference Series at Oxford (Vol. XX.). The drawing was once exhibited at the Old Water-Colour Society (where it was hung upside down!). It was No. 310 at the Ruskin Exhibition, Manchester, 1904. The position of the pilaster may be seen in Plate XXV. here.]

[2] [Reproduced in Vol. IV. p. 40.]

[3] [No. 62 in the Reference Series at Oxford; here Plate XX.]

[4] [The "(R.)" is now added. The sketch (here reproduced, Plate XXVI.) is No. 80 in the Reference Series in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford.]

Digitized by Google

44. Gate of Ruined School of St. John, Venice. (Photograph.)

Exquisite in floral sculpture, and finish of style.

45. Hawthorn Leaves, from the Base of Pilaster, in the Church of St. Maria de' Miracoli, Venice. (*R.*)

In the finest style of floral sculpture. It cannot be surpassed for perfectness of treatment; especially for the obtaining of life and softness, by broad surfaces and fine grouping.

46. Bas-relief from one of the Inner Doors of the Ducal Palace.

Very noble, and typical of the pure style.

47. St. John Baptist and other Saints. (Cima da Conegliano.)

Consummate work; but the photograph, though well taken, darkens it terribly.[1]

48. Meeting of Joachim and Anna. (*Vettor Carpaccio.*) (Photograph.)

49. Madonna and Saints. (*John Bellini.*) Portrait. (Mantegna.)[2] (Photographs.)

50. Madonna. (*John Bellini.*)[3]

With Raphael's "Della Seggiola." Showing the first transition from the style of the "Masters" to that of modern times.

The Photographs in the above series are all from the Pictures themselves.

[1] [Probably the photograph afterwards placed in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford: No. 8 in the Standard Series.]

[2] [Probably the photographs which are now in frames, Nos. 5 and 36 in the Standard Series at Oxford; compare *Lectures on Art*, § 183.]

[3] [Now No. 37 in the same series. For a note on these examples, see § 11 of the lecture (above, p. 435) and compare *Lectures on Art*, § 183.]

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX

REPORTS OF ADDRESSES ON ART

(1861–1868)

I. ARCHITECTURE IN FRANCE (1861)

II. COMPETITION AND MECHANICAL ART (1865)

III. THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL OF ART (1868)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

I

ARCHITECTURE IN FRANCE[1]

1. Mr. J. Ruskin, having been called upon by the Chairman,[2] said he should hardly venture to accept the invitation to address the meeting; for almost every member of the Society knew better than he did what was going on, both in France and England; many of them from personal knowledge, and some from professional engagements. He felt the difficulty all architects and other persons were placed in who had any connection with the restoration of ancient buildings. They ought not to throw stones at anybody, but what they should do was to suggest what should be done to ancient buildings under the most difficult circumstances. He himself for long had been utterly hopeless respecting the state of architecture in France—hopeless, especially because he felt that the line taken there was, that what was determined by the leading public men there would be carried out, and that any suggestion which might be made to those engaged in that course was likely to wound their vanity, and was likely to come ungracefully from us, who had not altogether shown ourselves prudent, or sufficiently cautious, perhaps, in the restorations we had undertaken at home.

2. He felt it was a great difficulty to interfere, and one great difficulty was the weakness of the French, which he supposed they would confess to themselves, which all nations shared with them—but which, perhaps, they would admit they possessed at all events, and which frequently led them to nobleness of action, as at Magenta and Solferino—he meant national vanity. So it might be in reference to the restoration of French architecture. He was afraid they would do harm if they brought forward any memorial on the subject to be presented to the French, unless they could show that they had a good ground for doing so. Ten years ago, he made the tour of the cathedral towns of France.[3] He

[1] [Remarks addressed to the Ecclesiological Society on June 13, 1861. Reported in the *Building News*, June 21, 1861. The report was reprinted in *Iydrasil* for December 1891, vol. iii. pp. 176–178, and also in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, 1892, part ii. pp. 197–199. The paragraphs are here numbered for convenience of reference.]

[2] [Mr. A. J. B. Beresford-Hope.]

[3] [In 1849 Ruskin made a tour of Normandy. In 1850, on his way back from Venice, he visited Avignon, Orange, Valence, Vienne, Lyons, and Bourges: see the Introductions to Vol. VIII. and Vol. IX.]

Digitized by Google

should have remarked, however, that twenty years ago the cathedrals of France were all safe, as far as modern work was concerned; and, as a lover of architecture, he mourned over the restorations now being made in France of her ecclesiastical buildings. There was, twenty years ago, nothing of importance undertaken in the way of restoration, but ten years after that things were changed, and the traveller at Amiens, Chartres, Notre Dame, and other places—in fact, wherever he went, he had to get out of the way of horses and carts filled with stone and other building materials, to carry on alterations then being proceeded with, but none of them finished, and the structures being full of scaffolding. Although he deprecated the adoption of any memorial to the French authorities on the subject of restoration, yet he thought they might wisely and courteously suggest, that when a restoration had been commenced it should be carried on and gone through, instead of scaffolding being kept up at buildings under restoration for so great a length of time. If he wished to send a pupil to study a French cathedral, at present he hardly knew where to send him, the buildings being enveloped in so much scaffolding.

3. Then an important matter for them in England was certainly for them to settle their own code of restoration. Could they go to France and give their neighbours their advice, while they were not agreed themselves as to what should be done in the way of the restoration of a building? They, many of them, differed in opinion as to the mode of restoration, and he referred particularly to the difference of opinion as to what should be done with sculpture. What he had proposed was considered extravagant and impracticable. The whole ecclesiastical architecture of France, however, was likely to be destroyed by one perpetual scrape, and thus would be removed the power of making an architectural history of the country. He wanted to know something of the thirteenth century, because it was his intention to write a history of the thirteenth-century architecture;[1] and ten years ago he set to work on the French churches, and found that all his important documents were then in part destroyed, and that in five years more they would be destroyed. He accordingly gave the thing up, and not only that, but he gave up architecture—he never cared about architecture since. It was a hopeless thing, he thought. He stood forward honestly and earnestly that night as an advocate against the destruction of buildings, under the name of restoring them;[2] but, at the same time, deprecated any over-zeal in the way of sending a memorial to the French, until they had come to some decided opinion on the subject themselves.

4. What it seemed, therefore, they had to do was to determine, first, whether they at present, as architects generally, had the power of restoring effectually to its former appearance any great ecclesiastical building, and whether, if they had the power of doing so, it was expedient to do so, and to what degree. That it was right to put a stone in here and a bolt in there, to take care that no indolence or carelessness shall interfere

[1] [Compare *Eagle's Nest*, § 239; and on the importance of thirteenth-century art, Vol. XII. p. 108, Vol. XVI. p. 276.]

[2] [For a collection of passages on Restoration, see the General Index, *s.v.*]

Digitized by Google

with the stability of a building, and that no unauthorized person shall interfere with it, he supposed they were all agreed upon. An important question was whether a cathedral could be properly restored. Not that there was any want of capacity on the part of our architects of the present day, for he believed that there was as much genius and talent amongst architects now as there ever was.

5. After referring to the importance of the *ecclesia*, the speaker said they should see whether they could get the sympathy of their own people before they attempted to influence the actions of the people of France. What power had they as copyists? What power had any man as a copyist? Supposing they had the best architects in the world, could they rebuild a cathedral as it had been built? Whatever good work there was in a cathedral was the result of a good strong hand and mind. All good art was the expression of the whole man—of his soul and heart, of his intellect, and of the whole power of his body.[1] The whole personal power and energy of the body were required, as well as the power and energy of the soul. This was certain, that no great work of art existed which did not give some expression of the mind of the man at work; it was the handwriting of the thing. Now, he was not prepared to say how far that handwriting could be put upon art. He was much attached to the thirteenth-century buildings; in some thirteenth-century work there was the expression of as tender a feeling, and of as high genius, as was ever put upon stone or canvas. And he believed the peculiar characteristic of the thirteenth century was not its severity, plainness, nor its soul-stiffness or persistence, but its tenderness. Some people called Dante a monster, while Dante was simply the most tender of all poets.[2] So they had also thought the thirteenth-century architecture might be carried out by rule, instead of looking at the infinitely far more precious thing, the mark of the real tenderness and glory of the human soul in every touch. So it was in poetry of the age of Dante. They would see how general the character of the tenderness was. The thirteenth-century sculpture had in its touch that which nothing could replace, unless the same tenderness were shown. Could one man follow out the thoughts of another, and put the thoughts of the same mind and depth in the restoration of a building as he who made the building? They might copy the autographs of their friends or of all the great men in England, in the British Museum or elsewhere, but assuredly they could not do anything of that kind in sculpture. The necessity of restoration involved the impossibility of restoration; they might put a head on a figure if the head were off; they put on a new one, and that was not a restoration, but it was a substitution of the nineteenth-century impression. They might talk of restoration, but it was an impossibility in sculpture; they might as well talk of raising the dead. As he understood, what they were to do that night was to determine what should be done in respect of French restoration.

6. After some observations on this point, the speaker proceeded to say that the whole question was how they were to recover the vitality of

[1] [Compare *The Queen of the Air*, § 105 (above, p. 391).]
[2] [On the tenderness of Dante, see Vol. IV. p. 257.]

Digitized by Google

architecture and lose as little as possible of its impression. They could get a municipality to restore a cathedral, but they could not get a municipality to build a new one. The great matter was to replace a decayed stone by a good sound stone, but they ought not to put in a single stone with sculpture upon it; let every bit of old sculpture be retained, but not a bit of new stone put in with sculpture upon it. He disapproved of their taking any step in the way of finding fault with what their French neighbours were doing, and thought they should determine rather what they should themselves set as a wholesome example.

Digitized by Google

II

COMPETITION AND MECHANICAL ART[1]

1. The lecturer commenced his address by stating that ill-health and a pressure of work had prevented him from being with them as often as he could have wished; but he had the satisfaction of knowing that they had very good masters in Messrs. Lowes Dickinson, Jeffrey, and Cave-Thomas.[2] When he was with them he also felt that he was not exactly the person they wanted. He could best illustrate what he meant by telling them a thing which struck him very much at the time he attended the classes. One of the best men in his class gave him great satisfaction by the execution of his work, which made him think his pupil had a great perception of beauty. He exhibited much tenderness and grace in his expression. He (Mr. Ruskin) believed most of them grumbled because he did not praise them enough; still, he thought they would do him the justice of saying that he grumbled at his own work as well as at theirs. He was a grumbler generally. However, one day he said to this student that his work was very good—very nice. On hearing this the student fell back in his chair and laughed almost like a child. He was intensely delighted with the praise. Now, he watched them more closely after that, and saw how strongly the love of praise and the instinct of competition were in their minds; that it was not so much a love of what they did as the delight either in the personal sense of having done it well, to which there was no objection, or the doing it better than others. This was a sense which was greatly encouraged in us by many of our teachers and the very method of education. There was not a girl, boy, or man who was not urged forward to do better than his neighbour, and they all took that poisonous stimulus and swallowed it as if it were as sweet as sugar. He did not say that they did not compete in a brotherly way; but they enjoyed the competition more than anything else.[3]

[1] [An address delivered by Ruskin at the Working Men's College, Great Ormond Street, on November 18, 1865. Reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, November 21, 1865. The report was reprinted in *Igdrasil* for December 1891, vol. iii. pp. 179–181, and also in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii., 1892, pp. 200–202. The paragraphs are here numbered for convenience of reference.]

[2] [On Mr. Lowes Dickinson, see Vol. V. p. xxxviii. He worked as assistant-master under Ruskin, and then succeeded to the mastership of the class; he has contributed his reminiscences of the class to the records of *The Working Men's College*, 1854–1904, edited by J. Ll. Davies, 1904, pp. 34 *seq.* Mr. Jeffrey was an assistant-master, and Mr. Cave-Thomas in turn succeeded Mr. Dickinson (see *ibid.*, pp. 37, 38).]

[3] [For other passages in which Ruskin discourages competition and rivalry, see Vol. VII. p. 460, Vol. XVI. pp. 373, 469, Vol. XVIII. p. 319.]

Digitized by Google

2. This was a feeling which he observed to be strong amongst them and it was a feeling which would prevent them from ever excelling in any great and noble thing. They could not enjoy their work so long as they were thinking whether they were doing it better than Jones or Robinson by their side. These remarks did not apply to drawing only, but also to many things in trade. It was not the love of money—although we loved it in England, yet we were not misers on the whole—but it was the love of gain which set our rich men scrambling for money like so many pigs rooting up the ground. It was the love of gaining more than their fellow-pigs. The place of every man was fixed when he was born, by his race, by his circumstances, by the will of the Spirit who made him. His head would be of such a shape and his muscles of such a strength, and no will of man could change his being. All he could do was to make the best of it. He might make the best or the worst of his being, but he could not make himself another creature, nor compete with another creature. The only thing for him to do was to make the best use he could of the gifts which had been given to him. They sometimes held each other's hands, but they did not become each other. A chain was kept together by links, some small, some large; but all must be sound, or the chain would not hold together. So far as they could compete with anybody, they should remember that they could only do so with equals. There would be no struggle in a game of chess between Morphy and himself,[1] nor would there be between Ross and the youngest of the beginners in their rifle corps.[2] There could only be a struggle between equals. But if they only watched their equals they would not raise themselves. They must look up as high as they could. They could star-gaze as much as they pleased, but then they could not compete with the stars.

3. There was, however, one kind of competition which had a good part belonging to it; and there was nothing which was very deadly in its abuse that had not a virtue in its use. The abuse would soon be found out if there were no good at the bottom of it. They would soon throw aside arsenic if there were no good in it—there was some virtue in blue pill, and they occasionally took it; but they did not live on blue pill. So competition was good to try their strength. There was a pleasure in racing and boxing; but it consisted in its being a mere trial of skill, and not from a desire of victory.

4. If they could only compete with their equals, so could they only do so in certain things. They could not in matters of the brain. In purely mechanical works they could. If he were to give up the whole of his life to match, say, a Camberwell 'busman in his jokes, he could not do it; but if this same 'busman were to devote himself to compete with him in the mechanical part of drawing he could accomplish it. It was a great deal of this which at present drove them into the mechanical part of art.

[1] [Paul Charles Morphy (1837–1884), an American chess champion, whose feats had excited much admiration in this country shortly before the date of this address. For Ruskin's interest in chess, see Vol. VI. p. 85, Vol. XIII. p. 259.]

[2] [Captain Horatio Ross (1801–1886), M.P.; captain of the Scottish team in the match for the Elcho Shield, 1862; took part in the match five times.]

Digitized by Google

We were so mechanical that workmen allowed themselves to be called hands, and never thought of asking anybody to call them heads. They knew there must be an awful truth at the bottom of it. From high to low they were losing their ideas of beauty in following after dexterity. While he could get any amount of skill, patience, and perseverance, and obtain marvellous things from the hand, there was not the delight in beauty, which was exactly the thing he wanted to bring to them. He was not complaining of the greatest possible skill of hand, but that the mechanical should be allowed to usurp the place of beauty, intellect, and passion.

5. It was not among them only that this was taking place, but also among the highest artists. They might see on the walls of the Academy many thoroughly able pictures, magnificent in power, for there were men amongst us capable of being as great artists as there were in this world; but they were kept down by the habit of consulting the public taste and following the sympathies of others, instead of doing that which they knew to be right. Much of that which was in the Academy was prettiness, not beauty. There were the noblest examples of human beauty both in men and women around us; yet with these noble and lovely creations we were content with vile and vulgar realizations. He had not seen a beautiful English girl painted, nor a noble English man.

6. Mr. Ruskin proceeded in a very humorous way to illustrate his argument, and then pointed out the difference between Greek and English art, as shown in coins of the two peoples. For this purpose he had admirably drawn two Greek coins on a large scale, which were exhibited in the room. One was a coin of Camarina, a town on the south coast of Sicily, and coined about 400 B.C. The subject of it was the head of Hercules, with the skin of the Nemean lion, with its mouth and head as his helmet.[1] The lecturer, after minutely describing the beautiful manner in which the subject had been treated, as well as its being a record of an event, distributed a number of "farthings," the mechanical execution of which he highly approved of, but which, he said, was lamentably deficient in beauty of design. The object appeared to be to say that Britannia was powerful: then there was a figure with a trident, sitting upon something which was hidden by a shield. The only thing entirely our own was a ship and lighthouse, which had been made very small. Above all these was a noble piece of information, a grand legend, a divine motto —"Farthing," in very fine letters, as big as Britannia's head. Seriously, these "letters" were exquisitely done—nothing could be better; but still the great thing told was that it was a "farthing." How different was the treatment of the Greek coins! In this one, belonging to Camarina, they could with a microscopical glass see that word, but so artistically disguised that the letters formed a part of the beautiful design as a whole —quite subordinate, yet auxiliary. In this they had a complete essence, the harmony of all Greek art. The second coin illustrated was one from the city of Tarentum, which was also equally exquisite in its symbolical design.[2]

[1] [See the lecture, suggested by this coin, "The Hercules of Camarina," in *Queen of the Air*, §§ 161 *seq.*; above, pp. 410–420 *seq.*]

[2] [For references to the coins of Tarentum, see above, p. 69 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

All the great teachers of Greek art warned their students against a cultivation of mechanical art.

7. In concluding a most instructive and amusing address, Mr. Ruskin cautioned those belonging to the art classes at the Working Men's College not to overstrain themselves; they would not gain anything by it. All wholesome and good progress was achieved calmly. It was worse than useless to overstrive and overtax themselves. Which of them, by taking thought, could add one cubit unto his stature?[1] It was the mere story of Procrustes' bed. The real rack was when they allowed the size and nobleness of their fellows to torment them to try and rival them. They must not suppose that they who came there for a few hours could rival great artists, but they could learn to express their thoughts in an intelligible and pleasant way. They might, if they liked, consider this place as a wholesome public-house, where they came to drink moderately. They could only drink well when they drank moderately.

8. He hoped that before long there would be working men's museums, in which they would have a sufficient number of good objects for them to study. The British Museum was more a depository for specimens of all that was good and beautiful than a place of study.[2] It was much better that they should have examples which they could be allowed to handle and examine than only be able to look upon in a glass case. Casts were therefore very useful to them. Besides, they did not want for examples those things which they could not reasonably hope to attain to. What was sufficiently above them to enable them to reach it was what they wanted. He wanted museums for working men at night, possessing a quantity of things which they could use; not too many things, but what they had good, in rooms well ventilated and well lighted.

9. Above all, let them gain as men, and not as mere hands. It was not by being too good or too clever that they could make the best of themselves. He believed there was actually more harm done by "good" men than by evil. Let them look at the war in America, and the revolt in Jamaica.[3] Be good first, and wise afterwards. What a noble saying was that of Epictetus, "I was a slave, and in my body sick even to the death, and in penury, a beggar—and beloved of the gods!"[4] Beloved of the gods! That was one of the grandest things ever written by the human mind.

After again urging them not to neglect a cultivation of true beauty while seeking after dexterity in mechanical execution, Mr. Ruskin resumed his seat amidst loud applause. In the course of his address he read a passage from a work which he will shortly publish, which contained very sarcastic remarks upon some modern "institutions."[5]

[1] [Matthew vi. 27.]
[2] [Compare the lecture on "National Art," above, pp. 219 *seq.*]
[3] [On these subjects, see Vol. XVII. pp. 476 *seq.*, and Vol. XVIII. pp. 550 *seq.*]
[4] [Compare Vol. VI. p. 22, and Vol. XVII. p. 522.]
[5] [The passage was presumably from *The Crown of Wild Olive* (published in the following year), where he discusses "Working Men's Institutes," and asks how they are supposed to differ from "Idle Men's Institutes" (see Vol. XVIII. p. 402).]

Digitized by Google

III

THE THREE-LEGGED STOOL OF ART[1]

Mr. Ruskin addressed the students, complimenting them with discrimination on the progress which they had made in the study of art. He had watched the progress of the school, and regretted that he had not been able to devote more time and attention to giving advice and assistance when required of him. Agreeing to some extent with the opinion of the hon. chairman as to the lesson to be learned from the useful and agreeable refreshment room of a railway station, he could not but think that art was misplaced when applied to a place where everybody was in a hurry. He thought art itself should, however, be refreshing in its character, no matter under what circumstances it was applied. Art should be run after open-eyed, not open-mouthed. The most beautiful works of art were always done in youth, and he advised those who heard him to do whatever they did with hearty goodwill, and with an endeavour to make it faultless. He advised them to study carefully what he called "the three-legged stool of art"—viz., form, shade, and colour. If they worked and studied earnestly, they must live on bread and water during their early days, but they would in the end feed upon ambrosia.

[1] [Remarks made on July 18, 1868, at the distribution of prizes to the successful students of the West London School of Art, held in the lecture-room of the Geological Museum, Jermyn Street, under the presidency of Mr. Beresford Hope, M.P. The remarks were reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, July 20, 1868; reprinted in *Igdrasil* for December 1891, vol. iii. p. 187, and also in the privately issued *Ruskiniana*, part ii., 1892, p. 210.]

END OF VOLUME XIX

Digitized by Google

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
Edinburgh & London

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

FINE ARTS LIBRARY
3 2044 032 644 78

THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

APR 16 '83

CANCELLED
MAR 24 1983

177 R95 vol. 19
Ruskin
Cestus of Aglaia

DATE	ISSUED TO
AUG 7 '28	Field
APR 17 OCT 29 '56	P. R.
	I. L. L.
OCT 20 '56	Miss Reeves Business
OCT 29 '57	Wal
FEB 20 '58	W
JAN 20 '60	
04 1	

177
R95
vol. 19

Digitized by Google

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY

OF THE

FOGG ART MUSEUM

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Two thousand and sixty-two copies of this edition—of which two thousand are for sale in England and America—have been printed at the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh, and the type has been distributed.

Digitized by Google

LIBRARY EDITION

THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1904

Digitized by Google

FOGG ART MUSEUM
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

All rights reserved

Digitized by Google

LIBRARY EDITION

VOLUME XIV

ACADEMY NOTES

NOTES ON PROUT AND HUNT

AND OTHER ART CRITICISMS

1855–1888

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Val d' Aosta

From the picture in the possession of B F Cooper Esq

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ACADEMY NOTES

NOTES ON PROUT AND HUNT

AND OTHER ART CRITICISMS

1855–1888

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
NEW YORK: LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1904

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS OF VOLUME XIV

PAGE

List of Illustrations xv

Introduction to this Volume xix

Part I. "Academy Notes" (1855–1859, 1875):—

1. 1855. Bibliographical Note 4

Text:—

Preface 5

The Royal Academy 7

Supplement 30

2. 1856. Bibliographical Note 42

Text:—

Preface 43

The Royal Academy 47

The Society of Painters in Water-Colours . . 73

The Society of British Artists 83

The French Exhibition 83

Postscript 85

3. 1857. Bibliographical Note 90

Text:—

The Royal Academy 91

The Society of Painters in Water-Colours . . 121

The New Society of Painters in Water-Colours . 135

The Society of British Artists 139

The French Exhibition 141

Digitized by Google

PAGE

4. 1858. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 146

TEXT :—

PREFACE 147

THE ROYAL ACADEMY 151

THE FRENCH EXHIBITION 173

THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS 183

THE NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS . 189

THE OLD SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS . 195

5. 1859. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 208

TEXT :—

PREFACE 209

THE ROYAL ACADEMY 211

POSTSCRIPT 239

WATER-COLOUR SOCIETIES 241

THE FRENCH EXHIBITION 251

THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS 255

6. 1875. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 260

TEXT :—

PREFACE 261

THE ROYAL ACADEMY 263

LIST OF ARTISTS AND WORKS MENTIONED IN "ACADEMY NOTES" . 311

PART II. LETTERS AND PAPERS ON PICTURES AND ARTISTS (1858–1887) :—

1. PRE-RAPHAELITISM IN LIVERPOOL (1858) 327
2. GENERALIZATION AND THE SCOTCH PRE-RAPHAELITES (1858) . 329
3. JOHN LEECH'S OUTLINES (1872) 332
4. ERNEST GEORGE'S ETCHINGS (1873) 335
5. THE FREDERICK WALKER EXHIBITION (1876) 339
6. ARTHUR BURGESS (1887) 349
7. THE BLACK ARTS. A REVERIE IN THE STRAND (1887) . . 357

Digitized by Google

PAGE

PART III. NOTES ON SAMUEL PROUT AND WILLIAM HUNT (1879–1880):—

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE 369

TEXT:—

PREFACE 373

WILLIAM HUNT 377

SAMUEL PROUT 384

NOTES ON THE DRAWINGS:—

PROUT 405

SUPPLEMENTARY DRAWINGS 435

HUNT 440

INDEX OF DRAWINGS BY PROUT 449

" " " HUNT 452

APPENDIX

I. LETTERS ON "ACADEMY NOTES":—

1. TO MR. GEORGE SMITH (1855) 457

2. TO MR. F. S. ELLIS (1875) 458

II. LETTERS TO JAMES SMETHAM (1854–1871) 460

III. SPEECH ON THOMAS SEDDON (1857) 464

IV. LETTERS TO G. F. WATTS, R.A. (1860–1866) 471

V. THE REFLECTION OF RAINBOWS IN WATER (1861) 474

VI. EVIDENCE BEFORE THE ROYAL ACADEMY COMMISSION (1863) . 476

VII. MODERN CARICATURE:—

A LETTER TO FRANZ GOEDEKER (1883) 490

A LETTER ON "THE IRISH GREEN BOOK" (1888) . . . 490

VIII. THE ART OF MEZZOTINT (1884) 492

IX. THE NUDE IN ART (1885) 493

X. NOTES ON J. E. MILLAIS, R.A. (1886) 495

Digitized by Google

PAGE

XI. Passages from Exhibition Catalogues, etc.:—

1. An exhibition of studies in oil by the Hon. Stephen Coleridge in 1891 (a letter of 1884) . . . 497
2. An exhibition of drawings by Sutton Palmer (1886) . 497
3. Thomas Girtin (1887) 498
4. A note by Mr. Arthur Severn, R.I. (1892) . . . 498

The following Minor Ruskiniana are also included in this Volume:—

Extracts from Ruskin's Diary:—

A visit to Henry Gastineau (March 9, 1844) 127
The French School of Painting (Amiens, September 23, 1856) . 141
A "Frère" in real life (Calais, 1859) 83
The works of Louis Knaus (Düsseldorf, 1859) 252

Extracts from Ruskin's Letters to his Father:—

The Val d'Aosta described (Ivrea, August 26, 1851) . . . 236
J. F. Lewis, R.A., needed at Venice (September 16, 1851) . . 219
David Roberts, R.A., at Venice (September 29, October 23, 1851) 167
E. W. Cooke, R.A., at Venice (December 7, 1851) 69
William Hunt's "Dove" (Venice, January 10, 1852) . . . 444
Carrick's "Weary Life" (Bellinzona, June 13, 1858) . . . xxv
A critique in the "Economist" (Bellinzona, June 18, 1858) . 147
Brett's "Stonebreaker" (Bellinzona, June 22, 1858) . . . 171
Hostile criticism as a spur (Turin, August 5, 1858) . . . 146
Ruskin and Inchbold (Turin, August 9, 1858) xxiii
"Academy Notes, 1858" (Turin, August 11, 1858) xxvii
G. Richmond's "Oil Campaign" (Turin, August 11, 1858) . . 19
Horse painting (Turin, August 19, 1858) 174
Ruskin and J. Brett (Turin, August 26, 1858) xxiii
The death of Mrs. Wells (Boulogne, July 19, 1861) . . . 30

A Letter to Clarkson Stanfield, R.A. (1853) 103

A Letter to William Davis (1857) 32

Digitized by Google

PAGE

MINOR RUSKINIANA: *Continued*:—

A LETTER TO MISS SINNETT ON "PAINTRESS" (1858) 308

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO MR. GEORGE ALLEN ON "ACADEMY NOTES," (1875) xxx

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MAGAZINE OF ART" (1887, 1888) 357

EXTRACT FROM THE CATALOGUE OF AN EXHIBITION AT DOUGLAS (1880) . 238

REMINISCENCES OF RUSKIN:—

BY THOMAS SEDDON (1855) 464

BY FREDERICK GOODALL, R.A. (1856) 173

BY H. S. MARKS, R.A. (1856) xxviii

DAVID ROBERTS, R.A. (*circ.* 1855–1859) xxix

BY ARTHUR BURGESS (*circ.* 1860–1870) xxxiii

BY M. H. SPIELMANN (1887) 357

REMARKS BY RUSKIN ON THE PICTURE EXHIBITIONS OF 1885 496

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATES

VAL D'AOSTA (*from the picture by John Brett, A.R.A., in the possession of R. P. Cooper, Esq.*) . . . *Frontispiece*

PLATE

I. BURD HELEN (*from the picture by W. L. Windus*) . . . . . *To face page* 85

II. SIR ISUMBRAS AT THE FORD (*from the picture by Sir J. E. Millais, P.R.A., in the possession of R. H. Benson, Esq.*) . . . . . „ „ 106

III. THE CHILD'S PRAYER (*from the engraving by W. H. Simmons after the picture by Edouard Frère*) . . . . . „ „ 142

IV., V. BOTANICAL STUDIES (*Woodcuts by Arthur Burgess*) . . . . . „ 350, 354

VI. PORTRAIT OF SAMUEL PROUT (*from the drawing by William Hunt*) . . . . . *To face page* 373

VII. A COURTYARD AT ABBEVILLE (*from a photograph by Ruskin*) . . . . . „ „ 388

VIII. AMIENS (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . „ „ 392

IX. ABBEVILLE (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) „ „ 395

X. COMO (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . „ „ 398

XI. CALAIS (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) *Between pp.* 408, 409

XII. CALAIS (*from the drawing by Ruskin*) . „ 408, 409

Digitized by Google

PLATE

XIII. Evreux (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) *To face page* 410

XIV. Strassburg (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) „ „ 412

XV. A Street in Lisieux (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . . . . . „ „ 414

XVI. Antwerp (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . „ „ 418

XVII. Domo d'Ossola (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . . . . . „ „ 422

XVIII. The Monument of Can Signorio della Scala at Verona (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . . . . . „ „ 423

XIX. The Ducal Palace, Venice (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . . . . . „ „ 424

XX. St. Mark's Place, Venice (*from the drawing by Samuel Prout*) . . . . . *Between pp.* 426, 427

XXI. The St. Jean d'Acre Pillars, Venice (*from the drawing by Ruskin in the British Museum*) *Between pp.* 426, 427

XXII. Study of Oak-Leaves (*from the drawing by Ruskin in the Ruskin Museum, Sheffield*) *To face page* 436

XXIII. Portrait of William Hunt (*from a photograph*) . . . . . „ „ 440

XXIV. The Eavesdropper (*from the drawing by William Hunt in the possession of E. F. Quilter, Esq.*) „ „ 442

XXV. Plums (*from the drawing by William Hunt*) . „ „ 445

XXVI. Bird's Nest and May Blossom (*from the drawing by William Hunt*) . . . . . „ „ 446

XXVII. The Blessing (*from the drawing by William Hunt in the possession of James Orrock, Esq.*) „ „ 448

Digitized by Google

WOODCUTS IN THE TEXT

PAGE

An Initial Letter from an Illuminated MS. 350

Two Diagrams Illustrating the Reflection of Rainbows in Water 474, 475

FACSIMILES

A Page of the MS. of "Academy Notes," 1859 . *Between pp.* 214, 215

A Page of the MS. of "Notes on Prout and Hunt," 1879 . . . . . „ „ 376, 377

Note.—Of the drawings by Ruskin here reproduced, that of Plate xxi. was shown at the Coniston Exhibition, 1900 (No. 178), and that of Plate xxii. was reproduced by half-tone process in *Scribner's Magazine*, December 1898.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTION TO VOL. XIV

It was explained in the preceding Introduction that during the years which intervened between the fourth and the fifth volume of *Modern Painters*, Ruskin was engaged in four principal directions—(1) in arranging the Turner Bequest (Vol. XIII.); (2) in the criticism of contemporary art; (3) in the teaching of drawing; and (4) in public lecturing. The present volume covers the second branch of these activities. In it are collected the five numbers of *Notes on the Principal Pictures in the Royal Academy*, etc., which Ruskin wrote between 1855 and 1859; and to these are added the similar Notes written in 1875, together with various other pieces (1858–1888) which have for their subject the criticism of the art or artists of the time. The collection is not exhaustive, as other writings with similar subject-matter are necessarily reserved for later volumes. The most considerable of them are the extensive correspondence between Ruskin and D. G. Rossetti (1854–1867), and the Oxford lectures on contemporary British artists, entitled *The Art of England* (1884). These lectures are reserved for their chronological place in the series of Ruskin's professorial discourses at Oxford; the correspondence with Rossetti, though it includes many criticisms upon the painter's work, belongs more appropriately to the series of letters which are a memorial of Ruskin's friendships.[1]

The present volume is divided into three parts and an Appendix. Part I. comprises the six numbers of *Academy Notes*. In Part II. are brought together various scattered pieces on modern painters, draughtsmen, and engravers (1858–1888). Part III. is a reprint of the *Notes on Prout and Hunt* (1879); while in the Appendix will be found various minor letters, reports, and notes dealing with matters cognate to the other contents of the volume.

[1] Among other items, similarly reserved, are notes on Mr. Albert Goodwin and J. W. Bunney—these will be found in the volume containing matters related to Ruskin's Museum at Sheffield; and a series of letters to H. S. Marks, R.A. (in addition to those here given about F. Walker), included in the volume which collects Ruskin's Letters to Friends, already printed in various Memoirs, etc.

Digitized by Google

I

The vogue of Ruskin's books on art, and his wide circle of friends, pupils, and admirers, naturally led to frequent appeals for his opinion on current works of art. His private diaries and letters show that he was constantly being asked by amateurs for advice as to what they should buy; and a chief object of his books was to teach disciples what they should admire. The series of *Academy Notes*, begun in 1855 and continued annually until 1859, was thus undertaken to serve as a kind of "circular letter," telling people "the pictures in the Exhibitions of the year which appear to me most interesting, either in their good qualities or in their failure" (see p. 5). The Notes were intended also as particular criticisms designed to support and illustrate general statements in Ruskin's works. He had already, in the second edition of *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV., pp. 333–342), published under the heading "Addenda" (1848) some notes on pictures in recent Exhibitions of the Academy. The success of his letters to the *Times* on the Pre-Raphaelites (1851), in stemming the tide of hostile criticism against the young school, probably suggested to him the more regular and methodical exercise of his now considerable authority. "I do not at all care," he wrote in a letter of 1854, "for reputation in the matter. I *must* speak if I see people thinking what I know is wrong, and if there is any chance of my being listened to. I don't say I wouldn't care for reputation if I had it, but until people are ready to receive all I say about Art as 'unquestionable,' just as they receive what Faraday tells them about Chemistry, I don't consider myself to have any reputation at all worth caring about."[1] It was as one claiming authority that Ruskin wrote his *Academy Notes*. "Twenty years of severe labour," he said, "devoted exclusively to the study of the principles of Art, have given me the right to speak on the subject with a measure of confidence" (see p. 5). He exercised the right boldly; and his criticisms had considerable influence both on the work of several of the younger painters and in correcting the public taste of the time. *Academy Notes*, read in a connected form, are valuable, not only as containing Ruskin's individual opinions (not elsewhere expressed) on a large number of painters and pictures, but also as illustrating an important chapter in the history of art in this country. They also abound in passages of general interest, for with Ruskin criticism of art was

[1] *Letters from John Ruskin to F. J. Furnivall*, privately printed 1897, p. 31.

Digitized by Google

criticism of everything. Ruskin himself, it may be added, seems at one time to have intended to re-issue the Notes, for proofs of a reprint of part of them (dated 1876) were found among his papers.

Ruskin's criticisms were fearless and trenchant. They may be described from this point of view as a revival in prose form of the *Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians* which Dr. Wolcot, writing as Peter Pindar, had put out seventy years before (1782–1786). Ruskin showed no respect for names merely as names. He abased, so far as in him lay, some of the proud; he exalted many who were at the time of no reputation. "He does not condescend," wrote a reviewer, by way of reducing the Notes *ad absurdum*, "to notice Mr. Hart; but sees a future of good in Mr. Leighton." Time has in both cases vindicated Ruskin's criticism. The work of Solomon Hart is forgotten, while the promise shown in Leighton's "Cimabue" was steadily fulfilled.

Not all the painters whom he selected for notice won renown; but looking over these Notes after half a century has elapsed, the reader will be struck, as Mr. Collingwood has observed, by the shrewdness with which Ruskin "put his finger upon the weak points of the various artists, and no less upon their strong points"; and will remark "how many of the men he praised as beginners have risen to eminence, how many he blamed have sunk from a specious popularity into oblivion. . . . The men who laid their failure to his account were the weaklings whom he urged to attempts beyond their powers, with kindly support misconstrued into a prophecy of success."[1]

In this edition brief notes on the more important pictures and painters have been supplied. The short notice of each painter is given at the first mention of him, and can always be found on reference to the List (pp. 313–323). Biographical or critical particulars would have been out of place, but it has seemed well to remind the reader, by a few dates and other facts, of the stage in the career of the artists at which Ruskin's Notes were written. Ruskin, it will be seen, had the privilege of recognising, encouraging, and directing much early talent. It is important, with regard both to notices of particular painters and to remarks upon general tendencies, to read his Notes in relation to "the needs of English art at the time when they were made."[2]

Exception was taken in some quarters to the fact that Ruskin noticed only a few pictures in each exhibition. He replied that the pressure of time made a more extended critique impossible (see p. 147); and in

[1] *Life and Work of John Ruskin*, 1900, p. 162.
[2] Ruskin's phrase in sanctioning the reprint in 1886 of his Notes on Millais (see p. 495, below).

Digitized by Google

this connection the dates of publication of the successive Notes may be given. The Exhibition of the Academy opens on the first Monday in May. No. I. of the Notes was issued on June 1, 1855. Some of the men at the printers' were kept late on the work, and Ruskin characteristically sent them each a present (see the letter given below, p. 457). From the same letter it appears that the pamphlet was to be sold "as near the doors of the Academy as may be." No. II. was published on May 9, 1856, at 6d.; No. III., on May 16, 1857, at 1s.; No. IV., on May 8, 1858, at 1s.; No. V., on May 9, 1859, at 1s. Nos. I.–V. were published by Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. No. VI. (1875) was issued at the end of May, at 1s. It was printed at Aylesbury, and Ruskin went down there to see it through the press.

It was a main object of Ruskin's Notes to encourage and trace the growth of the Pre-Raphaelite influence. From this point of view, the first part of the present volume is a sequel to the earlier advocacy of the Brotherhood recorded in Volume XII. He devotes special attention in these *Academy Notes* to Pre-Raphaelite work (*e.g.*, pp. 19, 22), and then notices how the young school was winning all along the line (see pp. 47, 91). On behalf of the Pre-Raphaelite movement in the North he wrote at the same time some letters to the press, which will here be found in Part II. (pp. 327–331). In whatever respects British art after 1855 showed an advance in sincerity of purpose and thoroughness of study, much of the credit is due to the criticisms of Ruskin, which at once inspired or confirmed the painters and directed the taste of the public. A considerable portion of the *Academy Notes* is devoted to Millais, whose genius Ruskin was the first to proclaim, and never ceased to acknowledge, though he felt impelled to notice what he considered signs of some falling away on the artist's part from the ideals of his youth. Millais bitterly resented such criticism, and believed it to be inspired by personal motives (see p. 117 *n.*). The facts negative such a supposition, as is pointed out below (p. 22 *n.*). In Appendix X. (pp. 495, 496) are reprinted some later criticisms on the painter, and references to others are supplied; in them he expressed his profound admiration for the "free-hand painting" of the master. If he found fault with Millais in other respects, did not the artist himself show some premonition when he wrote in the older days, "People had better buy my pictures now, when I am working for fame, than a few years later, when I shall be married and working for a wife and children"? No one, it will be seen, was quicker than Ruskin to applaud, when towards the end of the artist's career he returned to the more poetical and imaginative themes of his youth.

Digitized by Google

It was a signal merit of Ruskin's *Academy Notes* that he called attention year after year to pieces of modest and quiet landscape by painters then unknown, which might otherwise have escaped notice altogether. His encouragement gave the decisive impetus to Alfred Hunt; he detected and praised the beautiful and still too little known work of Inchbold; he was among the warmest, as among the earliest, admirers of J. C. Hook; his criticisms called attention to the pictures of Brett, and Boyce, and Knight, of Henry Moore, and of Mr. Raven and Mr. Whaite.

With some of these painters Ruskin sought friendship, in order that he might the better encourage and assist them. Thus in 1856 he spent some time in Switzerland with Inchbold, and in later years continued to befriend, and also play the master to, the artist. He gives, with a touch of humour not to be taken too literally, an account of all this in a letter to his father:—

> "TURIN, *August* 9 [1858].—The two little drawings of which you speak in my bedroom are Inchbold's; the cottage, one I chose and made him draw at Lauterbrunnen; the Thun, bought when he couldn't sell anything, to help him a little. It isn't good for much, but is like a sweet Swiss evening. I wanted and ordered of him (paying him when he was at Chamouni last year) four more cottages; but he got entirely off the rails at Chamouni, and the cottages are failures. I stayed with him some time, or rather made him stay with me, at Bellinzona, in order to make him understand where he was wrong. He was vexed with his work and yet thought it was right, and didn't know why he didn't like it, nor why nobody liked it. It was a delicate and difficult matter to make him gradually find out his own faults (it's no use *telling* a man of them), and took me a fortnight of innuendoes. At last I think I succeeded in making him entirely uncomfortable and ashamed of himself, and then I left him."

So also Ruskin was for some years on terms of helpful friendship with Brett. The following letter of 1858 refers to a picture noticed in this volume (p. 234):—

> "TURIN, *August* 26.—I mentioned that Mr. Brett was with me at La Tour. He has been here a week to-day. I sent for him at Villeneuve, Val d'Aosta, because I didn't like what he said in his letter about his present work, and thought he wanted some lecturing like Inchbold: besides that, he could give me some useful hints. He is much tougher and stronger than Inchbold, and takes more

Digitized by Google

hammering; but I think he looks more miserable every day, and have good hope of making him completely wretched in a day or two more—and then I shall send him back to his castle. He is living *in* that castle which I sketched so long ago in Val d'Aosta—Château St. Pierre."[1]

Brett's picture (here reproduced as frontispiece) was bought by Ruskin, and hung in the drawing-room at Herne Hill until Ruskin's death. In 1869 it was offered for sale at Christie's and bought in (Vol. XIII. p. 572). It is now in the possession of Mr. R. P. Cooper.

Records of Ruskin's encouragement to other artists will be found in Appendix II. (Smetham) and III. (Seddon), pp. 461, 464.

Among foreign painters Ruskin was the first to call public attention in this country to the domestic idylls of Frère (pp. 83, 142, 174, 251).

In cases where Ruskin was not personally known to the painters, his criticisms often were no less powerful in suggestion, encouragement, or rebuke. For instance, at the beginning of the Notes for 1858 (p. 164) Ruskin had pointed out the beauty of the delicate pink of apple blossoms against the soft clear blue of a spring sky, and expressed his surprise that among all the modest and gentle beauties of nature which the new school have particularly made it their study to express, none of them should have chosen this. In the exhibition of the following year, it was noticed that "three distinguished artists had set themselves the task in consequence."[2]

Of another criticism of Ruskin's—that in the Notes of 1858 on Carrick's "Weary Life" (p. 164)—a fine and touching incident is recorded. Ruskin was abroad at the time:—

"Vokins wished me to name to you," wrote his father (June 3, 1858), "that Carrick, when he read your criticism on Weary Life, came to him with the cheque Vokins had given, and said your remarks were all right, and that he could not take the price paid by Vokins, the buyer; he would alter the picture. Vokins took back the money, only agreeing to see the picture when it was done."[3]

[1] The sketch (1835) is reproduced as Plate 21 in Vol. II. (p. 432).

[2] Namely, Millais in his "Spring," J. C. Horsley in "Blossom-time," and Mr. Hughes in "The King's Orchard" (*Economist*, May 28, 1859). So in another critique we read: "Ruskin has much to answer for. Probably such an avalanche of misconception and untruth was never let loose on the patient art-loving, nature-loving wanderer before. From Millais (who paints blossoms as big as babies' heads, growing on trees in full leaf) down to the sorriest scrub who seeks a teacher's certificate from the Department of Art, all appear to have taken the apple-blossom fever, and to have painted the blossoms when at the height of their delirium."

[3] Collingwood's *Life and Work of Ruskin*, 1900, p. 162.

Digitized by Google

Ruskin's comment on the incident is contained in the following reply:—

> "BELLINZONA, *June* 13.—I'm sorry, and yet glad, that Carrick behaved so nobly about his picture. I don't see that he need have given back his cheque, as I conceive a dealer's price is always intended to take the risk on either side, and that an artist, as he has no right to complain if the dealer doubles profit, so neither need he make restitution if the chance turns the other way. However, if artists always acted as Carrick has done, dealers would soon come to allow them a share in rise of price, which would be the just way for all parties."

Such anecdotes illustrate the interest which Ruskin's criticisms excited, and the influence which they exerted. "Mr. Ruskin's authoritative Notes," wrote a reviewer in 1858, "are now looked anxiously for by a number of ductile people, as something dogmatic and decisive, from which there is no appeal. . . . Besides, Mr. Ruskin's trenchant self-assertion of censorship creates a sort of tumult among artists, which is caught up and echoed by people out of doors, and enjoyed with all the zest of a scandal."[1]

It was not, however, only "trenchant self-assertion" that gave influence to his Notes. He wrote with authority, but he gave chapter and verse for it, and his criticisms were such as appealed to artists, as well as to the general public. It is sometimes said by those who have never carefully studied Ruskin that he showed no knowledge or appreciation of pictures as pictures, that he cared only for meaning and not at all for method, that he judged art from a purely literary standard.[2] This view can only be entertained by those whose knowledge of Ruskin's works is partial or superficial, and it may be useful to point out how completely it is traversed by the criticisms collected in the present volume. Turn, for instance, to the note on Herbert's "King Lear" (p. 18): criticism of that microscopic and technical character is not the work of a merely literary judge. Or consider the criticism of Roberts's "Duomo at Milan" (p. 95); or that of Maclise's "Peter the Great" (p. 96): these are the observations of a student of nature and a sketcher. In the *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, of a later date, Ruskin reaffirms a principle which he had often previously asserted — that "interest in the story of a picture does not in the least signify a relative interest in the art

[1] *The Leader*, May 22, 1858.
[2] See, for instance, a lecture on Ruskin delivered at the Royal Academy by Mr. Val Prinsep, R.A., and reported in the *Westminster Gazette* of January 20, 1903.

Digitized by Google

of painting," and that the first thing needful in these matters is "to understand what painting is as mere painting" (pp. 389, 440).[1] Ruskin's critics may say, if they like, that the technical standards he applied were mistaken; to say that he applied none at all is to state what is simply not the case. It is interesting to note that at the time when these critiques on the Academy appeared, an objection taken to them in the press was that they were too technical, and not sufficiently "literary." Thus one of the critics, in noticing the pamphlet of 1856, cites Ruskin's remarks about Holman Hunt's "Light of the World"—that "no one could sympathise more with the general feeling in it," but that "unless it had been accompanied with perfectly good nettle painting" he would never have praised it (p. 65); and then continues, "Let any one realise his own state of mind if he believed the Light of the world to be, indeed, before him; and if he thinks in that Blessed Presence he could have any eye for nettles, he will tolerate Mr. Ruskin's criticism, admire the temper of his mind, and think him a sound art critic: not otherwise."[2] So, again, another reviewer complained of Ruskin for making technical objections to a picture by Egg which was "so full of pointed narrative."[3]

In this connexion it is interesting to remark how in these Notes, as in other writings of the same or later date, Ruskin uses musical analogies to enforce his points. Thus in discussing the system of light and shade in a water-colour drawing by Fripp, he remarks that "treble notes must not be sharp and thin; the higher they are the more tender they must be, and in a certain sense the richer; it is the rich trebles that are sweet and precious" (p. 202).[4] In *The Elements of Drawing* (1856), and again in *The Two Paths* (1858), he constantly turns to music in order to illustrate artistic points, in the criticism of painting, which are best, or only, to be understood in terms of the sister art.[5] Those who imagine that Ruskin had no eye for the subtler harmonies of pictures as pictures would do well to consider these passages and to compare with them what he says about the essentially "decorative" art of Albert Moore (p. 272).

In the *Academy Notes*, as in the Turner Catalogues (compare Vol. XIII. p. xxxiii.) it may be noticed as characteristic of Ruskin that

[1] See also Ruskin's evidence before the Royal Academy Commission in 1863, p. 484, below.
[2] *The Guardian*, July 16, 1856.
[3] The *Art Journal*, August 1855, p. 238.
[4] See also pp. 199, 256, and compare Vol. VI. pp. 327, 328.
[5] Compare also a passage in the *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, below, p. 389.

Digitized by Google

he can exhibit his powers on a small scale, and suggest great principles in words of noble eloquence on slight occasion. In a letter to his father, there is an interesting criticism by himself on the Notes for 1858:—

> "TURIN, *August* 11.—I think both Gambart and Mr. Richmond are right about the Notes this year. Gambart is right, in so far that as a critique, there is not so much of interest in it as usual, partly because I was hurried and tired; partly because there were no pictures to stimulate me. I was disappointed with everybody—Lewis, Carrick, Hughes, Morris, and Frère. I hadn't a single picture that I could get warm about. But Tom Richmond is right in so far as there are statements of principle in this number more clear and useful than any that I allow to go into the Notes usually;—reserving such things chiefly for *M. P.* The paragraph on Henri le Hon contains a principle which will be found of very great value eventually."

The passage referred to, on the principles of colour and tone, will here be found at p. 178. Among other characteristic passages in which some ultimate principle of criticism is pointedly enforced, reference may be made to p. 244, where one of Ruskin's central doctrines—that of the spiritual power of art—is finely expressed, and to p. 290, where he insists on the essentially national character of the historical art that is best worth having.

Ruskin's annual Notes attracted, as we have seen, much attention; and *Punch*, reflecting the public opinion of the day, published the following

> "POEM BY A PERFECTLY FURIOUS ACADEMICIAN.
>
> I takes and paints,
> Hears no complaints,
> And sells before I'm dry;
> Till savage Ruskin
> He sticks his tusk in,
> Then nobody will buy.
>
> *N.B.*—Confound Ruskin; only that won't come into poetry—but it's true."

The Notes were, as an artist of the time bears witness, "eagerly looked for and as eagerly purchased."[1] Artists, as we know, "never

[1] *Pen and Pencil Sketches*, by H. S. Marks, R.A., 1894, vol. ii. p. 163.

Digitized by Google

read criticisms," but they somehow discover what the critics say. The pleasure of some who were favourably noticed, the wrath of those who were severely handled or (perhaps worse still) not mentioned at all, may be traced in several memoirs of the period. Men who had Ruskin's ear took measures to induce him to notice unregarded merit. The bitterness of those who dissented from his opinions may be judged from the tone of a criticism of the first number of *Academy Notes* in the *Quarterly Review* (March 1856: see below, p. 44 *n.*). In a lighter vein were various skits, in pen and pencil, prose and verse, which the Notes inspired. The skits were sometimes shown to Ruskin, and he enjoyed them. Among the authors of such skits was H. S. Marks, R.A., who owed to his parody of the Notes for the year 1856 a subsequent friendship with Ruskin.[1] Sir Edward Hamley also wrote a skit on "Mr. Dusky's" Notes,[2] and Ruskin had moreover many imitators as well as parodists.[3]

But the frankness of his criticisms was not appreciated or understood.[4] Ruskin did not allow his personal feelings to lead him either to hostile or to favourable prejudice. He played the part of Minos with severe impartiality: "strictly examining the crimes"[5] of all who entered the Academy. He had, as he claimed, the right to speak with authority; but it must be confessed that he sometimes spoke

[1] "The Notes for the year 1856 I made the subject of a little skit, with coloured caricatures of the pictures, and parodies of Mr. Ruskin's style in writing and critical views. I bound the few pages roughly together, for the thing never got beyond manuscript form. . . . At some gathering of artists Woolner told me that he had mentioned my brochure to Mr. Ruskin, who immediately expressed a wish to see it. I posted it to him the next morning, with an explanatory line or two, which was promptly acknowledged by the great writer, who thanked me for sending him the Notes, 'and still more for the compliment of you knowing I should enjoy them'" (*Pen and Pencil Sketches*, by H. S. Marks, R.A., 1894, ii. 164.)

[2] For particulars, see Bibliographical Note, below, p. 146; and for other skits pp. 4, 106 *n.*

[3] e.g., "*The Royal Academy Review. A Guide to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts, 1858, containing original, critical, and descriptive notices of upwards of 200 works of art.* By The Council of Four. Printed by Thomas F. A. Day, 13 Carey Street, Lincoln's Inn, 1858." This brochure (which contained a reference to Ruskin at p. iv.) was repeated in 1859 and 1860. Other publications of the kind followed. Of more interest was the pamphlet—"*Notes on the Royal Academy Exhibition*, 1868, Part I. by W. M. Rossetti, Part II. by Algernon C. Swinburne."

[4] It did not, however, in all cases imperil private friendship: see the Epilogue to the 1883 edition of *Modern Painters*, vol. ii., where Ruskin gave some account of his relations with the Royal Academy. "It was certainly not the *Academy Notes* of after years, but the Pre-Raphaelite schism, and most of all Turner's death, which broke my relations with the Royal Academy. I hope they may in future be kinder; its President [Leighton] has just lent me two lovely drawings for the Oxford schools, and, I think, feels with me as to all the main principles of Art Education."

[5] *Inferno*, v. 4.

Digitized by Google

also with arrogance. As, for instance, in the passage added to the first number, where he says that when he has attacked a picture it will hereafter be found that "the worst policy which the friends of the artist can possibly adopt will be to defend it."[1] Nor can it have been any comfort to artists thus attacked to learn that he never said half what he could say in dispraise. Among the artists thus chastened was David Roberts, R.A. "Feeling, perhaps," says an Academician with much sympathy, "that Roberts might find it difficult to reconcile an attempt to do him a serious injury with the usual interpretation of the term friendship, the critic wrote a private note to the artist, explaining his action on the hypothesis of a self-imposed duty to the public, and concluded his note by the expression of a hope that severe criticism would not interfere with the sincere feeling of friendship which the writer hoped would always exist," etc., etc. To this Roberts replied that the first time he met the critic he would give him a *sound thrashing;* and he ventured to "'hope that a broken head would not interfere with the sincere feeling of friendship which he hoped would always exist," etc., etc.[2] "D—— the fellow," exclaimed one young artist, "why doesn't he back his friends?" After 1859 the Notes were suspended. "Thenceforward," Ruskin explained, "it seemed to me useless, so far as artists were concerned, to continue criticism which they would esteem dishonourable unless it was false" (p. 261). Probably another reason for the discontinuance of the Notes may be found in the fact that at this time Ruskin's thoughts were in large measure diverted from art to ethics and economics. "Remember," he wrote, "that it is not so much in *buying* pictures, as in *being* pictures, that you can encourage a noble school."[3] "It is the vainest of affectations," he says again, "to try and put beauty into shadows, while all real things that cast them are left in deformity and pain."[4] In 1859 Ruskin was busily engaged in finishing *Modern Painters*, and afterwards turning to the problem of social reconstruction, wrote, instead of more *Academy Notes*, *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris*.

In 1875, however, the publication of *Academy Notes* was resumed for that year only, and only the Exhibition of the Royal Academy itself was noticed. Ruskin had, on a first inspection, been so much pleased with some of the pictures of the year that he determined to write "an entirely good-humoured sketch" of modern English painting (p. 265).

[1] See below, p. 35, and compare *Two Paths*, Appendix i.
[2] *My Autobiography and Reminiscences*, by W. P. Frith, R.A., 1887, vol. i. p. 128.
[3] *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 137.
[4] *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, p. 25.

Digitized by Google

In this resolve, he found it impossible to persevere; it was much more nearly achieved eight years later in the Oxford course of lectures on *The Art of England*. Further inspection of the Exhibition made it appear typical to him of tendencies in modern life and thought which it was his prerogative to chastise. It was in this mood that, in writing to Mr. Wedderburn, he said, "The R. A. Exhibition is so important that I must write a 'Notes' upon it as I used to do." After all, whatever theories of their function may be entertained by artists, their work cannot but be in a measure both didactic and historical; didactic, in that for good or evil it stimulates the fancy or directs the thoughts of spectators; historical, in that it corresponds to the feelings and interests of the time. It was from this point of view that Ruskin found the Exhibition of 1875 particularly instructive, and this explains the different form into which his Notes were now thrown. He did not take the reader round the rooms in order, but grouped the notable pictures under various heads according to their subject-matter (see p. 265). That he enjoyed his work, and was satisfied with "the devil" he put into it, appears from one of the familiar letters to his publisher-friend, Mr. F. S. Ellis, here reprinted in Appendix I. (p. 458). "There's a nice spicy flavour in it now, I think—as a whole—quite a 'loving cup' for the Academy." And in a similar vein he wrote to Mr. Allen, "These *Academy Notes* will have some sting in them at any rate; they have cost me dreadful trouble." Just as in Carlyle, the judicious reader makes some mental allowance for the sardonic humour of that artist in vituperation, so Ruskin's work will never be rightly understood except by those who remember that there was in him, and especially in his later writings, a certain element of elfish humour.

Most of the numbers of *Academy Notes* ran through several editions, of which account is given in the bibliographical notes here prefixed to the several catalogues (pp. 4, 42, 90, 146, 208, 260). The *text* adopted in this collection is that of the last and most complete edition of each pamphlet.

In 1885 an index to the six numbers of *Academy Notes*, compiled by Mr. John Morgan of Aberdeen, was printed for private circulation (second edition, 1890). This index was useful, but far from complete. In the present volume references to all painters and pictures mentioned in the *Academy Notes* are included in a List (pp. 313–323). It is given here because such an index has already been in circulation, and because there is some interest in bringing together thus in a separate form, instead of merging in a general index to all Ruskin's works, the

Digitized by Google

artists whom he selected for notice in these critiques. The topics discussed in the volume will of course be found entered in the General Index to the edition.

Of the Notes of 1855 and 1856, no *manuscripts* or proof-sheets have been seen by the editors. Of those of 1857, there are the proof-sheets of parts; of those of 1858, there is the MS. of parts at the beginning and at the end; and of those of 1859, there is the MS. of the greater part. All these are in Mr. Allen's possession. Of the Notes of 1875, four manuscript sheets (containing a first draft of pp. 263–267 in this edition) are in the possession of Mr. Wedderburn. There are no variations of special interest, but the MSS. and proof-sheets bear, as usual, abundant evidence of the care with which Ruskin weighed his words. This may be seen in the facsimile of a page of the MS. here given between pp. 214 and 215.

II

In the Second Part of this volume are collected some scattered critiques on painters, draughtsmen, and engravers. First come two letters of 1858 on the Pre-Raphaelites (pp. 327–331). These letters belong to a further stage in the history of the Pre-Raphaelite movement than that which we have already followed (Vol. XII. pp. xliii.–xlix.). Ruskin's defence of Millais and Holman Hunt in 1851 did much, as we have seen, to turn the current of criticism. Hunt's "Valentine and Sylvia," ridiculed and abused in the London press, was awarded a £50 prize by the Academy of Liverpool. The same Academy gave steadfast encouragement to the new school, awarding its annual prize during the next six years to one or other of its members. The prize in 1857 was awarded to Millais's "Blind Girl," which had been exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1856.[1] The award, and the general policy of the Liverpool Academy, in favouring the "Pre-Raphaelite heresy," exposed it to much hostile criticism in the press, and to some internal dissensions. Among the members of the Academy and the judges for the prize was Mr. Alfred Hunt, who wrote to Ruskin on the matter, begging his intervention. Ruskin's reply was then sent by Hunt for publication in the Liverpool press.

An appreciation of the Outlines of John Leech follows (pp. 332–334). This was written for a catalogue of an exhibition which was held in 1872. The exhibition consisted of some hundreds of the more finished tracings

[1] Ruskin's discussion of this picture will be found in *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 4.

Digitized by Google

which Leech made from his first sketches for the purpose of transferring the drawings to the woodblock, before working up their detail for the engraver. "The Family," it was explained in a preface to the catalogue, "contemplate disposing of them upon the condition of their being kept together—selections from them being distributed to schools and public colleges of art by means of photography." A Committee was formed for promoting this object, and Ruskin was a member of it. The object was not attained, and the outlines were dispersed. Many of Leech's drawings were bought by Ruskin and presented to his Museum at Sheffield.

The next piece, written for *The Architect* in 1873 (pp. 335–338), contains an appreciation of the etchings of Mr. Ernest George.

The letters on Frederick Walker, A.R.A., which follow (pp. 339–348), were written, as will be seen, to his friend H. Stacy Marks, R.A., who had been active in promoting an exhibition of Walker's works in 1876, the year after the artist's death.

The paper which comes next (pp. 349–356) requires some notice here, as the talented engraver, Arthur Burgess, with whom it deals, was for several years closely associated with Ruskin. Burgess was an engraver employed in wood-cutting for the *Illustrated London News*, and was first brought into relation with Ruskin through Miss Octavia Hill. Ruskin describes in this paper Burgess's first appeal to him for help and the response it met with. He was struck from the first, as he told Mr. Allen, with "the splendid cadence of line"[1] in Burgess's work. Ruskin set him to work on making drawings, to be afterwards engraved, of botanical subjects. A few of the blocks thus drawn and cut by Burgess, were printed in *The Century Guild Hobby Horse*, accompanying Ruskin's memorial article, and are here included. Many others exist, and some are given in this edition as additional plates in *Proserpina*. Several drawings by Burgess are also in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford. At first Ruskin employed him for half his time; afterwards he became a regular whole-time assistant, drawing an annual salary from Ruskin. The story of the relations between master and assistant is partly told in Ruskin's paper. An additional anecdote is given by Mr. Selwyn Image, to whose pen we may also attribute the personal recollections embodied in Ruskin's article (p. 352):—

"I know from his own lips and writing what Ruskin's deliberate opinion was as to the merit of his assistant's work—he held it in its way incomparable.

[1] Ruskin, says Mr. Allen, repeatedly used this phrase in speaking of Burgess's work.

Digitized by Google

But I well remember Burgess telling me how, in the early days of their connection, Ruskin was in the habit of coming into his room, when he was starting on, or had got some little way with, an enlarged cartoon for a lecture: and how if Ruskin did not see in the drawing at that early stage indication of the particular qualities he set store by, nothing would satisfy him with it; and he would count it a failure to the last. So often did this happen, and so embarrassing did it become, that at last Burgess plucked up courage and one day said, 'Sir, I am going to ask a favour of you. I think when you have once explained to me what you want in a drawing I can mostly get it for you. But sometimes what you want cannot be had till the drawing nears completion—and at any rate I can only get it my own way. Will you do me this favour of never coming in to look at the thing till I can show it you finished?' Ruskin knew his man, at once consented, and loyally kept his promise. There were few occasions after that on which he had to find fault with Burgess's drawings."[1]

Ruskin's admiration for his assistant's work steadily increased, and for a time Burgess was on terms of close friendship with him. In the end, Ruskin lost sight of him; and Burgess's life ended unhappily. "He did foolish and, it may be, unworthy things," says the writer just quoted, but all who came in contact with him were attracted not only by his high talents, but by many lovable traits in his nature.

The last piece in the Second Part of this volume (pp. 357–363) follows naturally after the preceding papers, being a series of thoughts and impressions on engraving and other "black arts." The paper appeared in *The Magazine of Art* for January 1888, and is among the last pieces which Ruskin wrote.

III

The Third Part of this volume contains a reprint of Ruskin's *Notes on Prout and Hunt.* These were written to illustrate a Loan Collection of Drawings, in part arranged by Ruskin, at the Fine Art Society's Galleries in the winter of 1879–1880. The reader comparing these Notes with those of the previous year on the Turner Drawings (Vol. XIII.) will be struck at once by the greater quietness of tone and more systematic treatment which characterise the later of the two catalogues. Ruskin had recovered from the illness which attacked him during the Turner Exhibition. There was perhaps, too, something in the modest art of Samuel Prout and William Hunt, and in the happy recollections

[1] "Personal Recollections of John Ruskin," a paper read before the Ruskin Union, June 25, 1903, and printed in *St. George*, vol. vi. pp. 296–297.

Digitized by Google

which it prompted, that induced in the author a mood of greater equanimity. In arranging their drawings his mind was carried back to the exhibitions, during his early manhood, at the Old Water-Colour Society (see p. 389). Those exhibitions, he writes elsewhere, "presented an aggregate of unaffected pleasantness and truth, the like of which, if you could now see, after a morning spent among the enormities of luscious and exotic art which frown or glare along your miles of exhibition wall, would really be felt by you to possess the charm of a bouquet of bluebells and cowslips, amidst a prize show of cactus and orchid from the hothouses of Kew. The root of this delightfulness was an extremely rare sincerity in the personal pleasure which all these men took, not in their own pictures but in the *subjects* of them—a form of enthusiasm which, while it was as simple, was also as romantic, in the best sense, as the sentiment of a young girl; and whose nature I can the better both define and certify to you, because it was the impulse to which I owed the best force of my own life."[1] The qualities of the art which Ruskin was analysing in these *Notes* passed into his own mood. In the *Notes on Prout and Hunt* there is something of the same limpid ease of mind and style which characterises *Præterita*.

It was indeed happy "scenes and thoughts" in his past life which the collection of Prout's and Hunt's drawings recalled to Ruskin. Samuel Prout (1783–1852) was a friend of Ruskin's father. His drawings were among the earliest with which Ruskin himself was familiar, and served as the models for his own first exercises in art. Prout was a constant guest at the dinner-party on Ruskin's birthday, and at Herne Hill and Denmark Hill they had him for a neighbour. "He went home to De-Crespigny Terrace from Denmark Hill one evening, seeming perfectly well and happy;—and we saw him no more."[2] The references to Prout in Ruskin's writings are, as might thus be expected, very numerous. In the earlier volumes, as in the later, of *Modern Painters*, Prout is mentioned as pre-eminent in his own line. Prout's letter to Ruskin's father, written after the publication of that volume, has already been mentioned, and Ruskin's letter to Prout given.[3]

[1] *The Art of England*, § 159.

[2] "On Monday, 9th [February, 1852]," wrote Ruskin's father, "we had Oldfield (Newton was in Wales), Harrison, George Richmond, Tom, Dr. Grant, and Samuel Prout. The latter I never saw in such spirits, and he went away much satisfied. Yesterday at church we were told that he came home very happy, ascended to his painting-room, and in a quarter of an hour from his leaving our cheerful house was a corpse, from apoplexy. He never spoke after the fit came on. He had always wished for a sudden death."—Collingwood's *Life and Work of John Ruskin* (1900), p. 137. Ruskin's reply to this letter has been given in Vol. X. p. 301 *n*.

[3] Vol. III. pp. xlii., 662.

Digitized by Google

In 1849 Ruskin contributed to *The Art Journal* an account of Prout's life and work (reprinted in Vol. XII. pp. 305–315), and in *Pre-Raphaelitism* (1851) he noticed the happy coincidence of Prout's special powers and interests (his short-sightedness notwithstanding) with the close of the great war (*ibid.*, p. 362). In *The Stones of Venice* (1851–1853) many other references to Prout will be found. In *The Elements of Drawing* (1857) his sketches are included among "things to be studied" by every young artist, for their "unrivalled power of composition and love and feeling of architectural subject." Again, in the lecture on "The Unity of Art" (1859), now included in *The Two Paths*, Ruskin gave another short summary of Prout's life and characteristics, and so also in one of his later lectures at Oxford (*The Eagle's Nest*, §§ 86, 87). These passages, and especially the separate essay on Prout, should be read in connection with the present *Notes*.

With William Hunt, also, Ruskin had long been on terms of familiar friendship, and Hunt's work had always strongly appealed to his sympathies. William Henry Hunt, of the Old Water-Colour Society, was born in 1790 and died in 1864. Ruskin's father had bought many of his drawings. The breakfast-room at Denmark Hill, "opening on the lawn and farther fields, was extremely pretty," says Ruskin, "when the walls were mostly covered with lakes by Turner and doves by Hunt" (*Præterita*, ii. ch. viii.). Hunt's drawings were among Ruskin's selected standards of excellence in his latest as well as his earliest books; and he had commissioned the artist to execute a series of studies for presentation to Schools of Art.[1] In the first volume of *Modern Painters*, Hunt's "keen eye for truth" was noticed, and in later volumes other characteristics were noticed. In one of the two articles which he contributed to the *Quarterly Review* in 1847–1848 Ruskin referred to Hunt's brilliant colour (Vol. XII. p. 288). In the pamphlet on *Pre-Raphaelitism* his power and aims were noticed with sympathetic praise (*ibid.*, p. 361), while in *The Elements of Drawing* he was pronounced "the best painter of still life that ever existed," and his methods were commended to the imitation of students (§§ 175, 256 *n.*). A letter has been preserved from Mr. Ruskin senior to his son, describing a visit to "old Hunt," as he was familiarly called:—

"I like the little Elshie," he says, nicknaming him after the Black Dwarf, for Hunt was somewhat deformed; "he is softened and humanised. There is a gentleness and a greater *bonhomie*—less reserve. I had sent him *Pre-Raphaelitism*. He had marked it very much with pencil. He greatly likes

[1] See below, p. 441.

Digitized by Google

your notice of people not keeping to their last. So many clever artists, he says, have been ruined by not acting on your principles."[1]

Ruskin had indeed praised the old painter for his honesty, earnestness, and constancy. Yet he regretted that "the last" was always of the same pattern. The passage in *Pre-Raphaelitism*, where Ruskin remarks that Hunt was meant to do something else in the world than "paint bouquets in china vases," should be read as supplementing the estimate of Hunt contained in the following pages, both in *Academy Notes* and in the *Notes on Prout and Hunt*.

The *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, in their original form, passed through four editions, as noted on p. 369. The *text* adopted in this volume is that of the fourth, the variations being noted either under the text or in the Bibliographical Note.

The *manuscript* of the Preface (§§ 1–40, and § 44) is at Brantwood; it consists of thirty sheets of ruled foolscap. Several of the variations are here noticed (see, *e.g.*, pp. 375, 390, 393, 397), and a page of the MS. is given in facsimile (pp. 376–377).

The Appendix contains a collection of minor letters, speeches, and notes on subjects cognate to the rest of the volume.

In Appendix I. are given some letters referring to *Academy Notes* (1855, 1875) which have previously been printed (for private circulation), and are therefore here included.

Appendix II. contains letters addressed by Ruskin to James Smetham (1854–1871) under circumstances explained in an accompanying note (p. 460). Smetham was grateful for Ruskin's encouragement, and sincerely admired both his character and his writings, as many a passage in his published letters shows—letters which are full of "melancholy grace, Brought from a pensive, though a happy place."

In Appendix III. are reports of speeches made by Ruskin (1857) on the Pre-Raphaelite painter, Thomas Seddon, in connexion with the memorial fund which was collected after the artist's untimely death.

These speeches, as well as the letters to Smetham, are typical of the friendly and helpful encouragement which Ruskin gave to so many earnest workers both in art and literature. The next series of letters (Appendix IV.) are addressed to Watts (1860–1866). They are interesting in themselves, and do honour, as is remarked by Mrs. Richmond Ritchie (from whose pages they are here reprinted), to "the candour and love of truth," alike of the writer and of the recipient.

[1] *The Life of John Ruskin*, by W. G. Collingwood, 1900, p. 136. For the "notice of people not keeping to their last," see Vol. XII. pp. 346–348.

Digitized by Google

In Appendix V. is a letter on a technical matter—the reflection of rainbows in water, which was called forth by a criticism on a drawing in one of the exhibitions of 1861. The subject of reflections in water was one to which Ruskin had given much attention. His keen and accurate observation had caused him to detect many errors in pictorial representations of these phenomena, and "Truth of Water" was one of the tests which he applied to the work of Turner as compared with that of other painters (Section v. in the first volume of *Modern Painters*). He replied at some length to criticisms of that section, and returned to the subject in *The Harbours of England* and *The Elements of Drawing*.[1] The theory of the matter also interested him, from his fondness for geometrical exercises—as may be seen in the appendix here.

The next Appendix (VI.) contains the evidence given by Ruskin in 1863 to the Royal Academy Commission; it is by no means out of date. "The only evidence of the lot," wrote Rossetti after perusing the Report, "which is worth reading as original thought and insight, is Ruskin's."[2]

The letters on Modern Caricature (1883, 1888) in Appendix VII. should be read in connexion with Ruskin's other writings on the same subject: see the note on p. 490.

Appendix VIII. contains some remarks on the Art of Mezzotint (1884), and Appendix IX., a letter on the Nude in Art (1885).

The Notes on Millais (1886) in Appendix X. have already been mentioned (above, p. xxii.).

In Appendix XI. some other minor notes on various artists and exhibitions are collected.

The *illustrations* to the volume are of various kinds, corresponding with the nature of its contents. (1) First, there are four plates giving reproductions of pictures which are discussed in *Academy Notes*. Many of the pictures selected by Ruskin for special notice are well known from engravings or are accessible in public galleries; those here reproduced are comparatively little known. The frontispiece is "Val d'Aosta," by John Brett, A.R.A.—a picture (now in the possession of

[1] See Vol. III. pp. 494 *seq.*, and pp. 655–661; Vol. XIII. p. 74; and *Elements of Drawing* (Vol. XV.), §§ 141 *seq.*, 249, 250. The subject has recently been treated in a monograph by Sir Montagu Pollock entitled *Light and Water; a Study of Reflexion and Colour in River, Lake, and Sea* (George Bell and Sons, 1903). "The present writer's own pursuit of the subject," says the author, referring to Ruskin's chapters, "though followed along a somewhat different line, has yet only served to increase his admiration of the great teacher's marvellous insight and power of observation."

[2] *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham*, 1897, p. 269.

Digitized by Google

Mr. R. P. Cooper) which is copiously noticed in this volume (see pp. xxiii., 172, 234, 238 *n.*, 293). Plate I. is "Burd Helen," by W. L. Windus—a picture to which Ruskin attached particular importance in the Pre-Raphaelite school (see pp. 85, 233, 330, 331). Plate II. is "Sir Isumbras at the Ford," by Millais—another picture which Ruskin discussed at length (pp. 106–111); it is in the possession of Mr. R. H. Benson. These three plates have been made, by photogravure, from the original pictures, by kind permission of the owners. Plate III.—one of the pictures by Frère especially praised by Ruskin (pp. 142, 348)—has been made from an early proof of the engraving after the picture by W. H. Simmons.

The next two Plates (IV. and V.) are woodcuts by Arthur Burgess; they are of botanical studies made by him for Ruskin, as described below (p. 350). These woodcuts were first published in *The Century Guild Hobby Horse*, vol. iii., on three plates (facing pp. 48, 50, 52); they have here been rearranged to suit the size of this edition. Most of the plants are copied from plates in *Icones Plantarum Floræ Danicæ* (see Vol. XIII. p. 530 *n.*). Thus on Plate IV. the woodcut on the left is of Primula Veris Officinalis, and the upper one in the middle is of Lychnis Alpina (both in vol. i. of that work). On Plate V. the woodcut on the left is of Lychnis Apetala (vol. v.); and that on the right, of Ophrys Spiralis (vol. iii.); the other woodcuts are from drawings by Ruskin. Another woodcut by Burgess—done from an illuminated MS. in Ruskin's library—is here inserted in the text (p. 350).

The next series of Plates (VI.–XXII.) illustrate the "Notes on Prout." First comes a Portrait of Prout (Plate VI.), by William Hunt. Of Prout's own drawings, twelve are here reproduced (Plates VIII.–XI., XIII.–XX.), all of them being the subject of special notice by Ruskin. An illustrated edition of the *Notes on Prout and Hunt* was issued in 1880, as described below (p. 370). The issue was not published by Ruskin, nor was he responsible for the illustrations, which were in autotype. They included (besides Hunt's portrait of Prout, here also given) fifteen of Prout's drawings; of these it has been found practicable to give ten here in photogravure, while two more drawings, which are at Brantwood, are also included. The twelve here given are of Amiens (see pp. 392, 410), Abbeville (pp. 395, 406, 410, 413), Como (pp. 397, 426, 431), Calais (pp. 402, 405, 408), Evreux (pp. 396, 410), Strassburg (pp. 396, 401, 410, 415), Lisieux (pp. 414, 415), Antwerp (pp. 396, 418), Domo d'Ossola (pp. 396, 419, 422, 431), the Monument of Can Signorio * (pp. 391, 423), Ducal Palace (p. 424), and the St.

Digitized by Google

Jean d'Acre Columns* (pp. 403, 427); those marked with an asterisk are added in this edition.

In the same section of the volume are given four plates of subjects selected from the "Supplementary Drawings," etc., which Ruskin included in the Prout Exhibition. One of these (Plate VII.) is a photograph by Ruskin of a Courtyard at Abbeville, to which he refers both in this volume and elsewhere in his works (see below, p. 388, and the references there given). Another Plate (XXII.) is a Study of Oak-leaves by Ruskin (see p. 436); the drawing, which is at Sheffield, is in water-colour ($9 \times 7\frac{1}{4}$). The other two plates in this division of the volume are drawings by Ruskin of subjects treated also by Prout —Calais (XII.) and the St. Jean d'Acre Pillars, Venice (XXI.): for Ruskin's references to these two drawings of his, see pp. 408, 427. The inclusion here of Prout's drawing of the Monument of Can Signorio will enable the reader to institute another comparison between Prout's work and Ruskin's, for Ruskin's drawing of the same subject has been given in Vol. XI. (Plate B, p. 90). The drawing of Calais was given by Ruskin to his friend, the late Dr. John Brown, whose son lent it to the publisher for reproduction in this volume. It is in pencil and wash on toned paper (12×7). The drawing of the St. Jean d'Acre Pillars is in water-colour ($6 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$), purple and blue picked out with white on purple paper. It is in the British Museum. "A very characteristic example," says the *Guide*, "of Mr. Ruskin's remarkable power of eye and hand in expressing the detail and character of sculptured ornament. He loved the colour purple, and has translated the material of these columns into that colour for his pleasure."[1]

The remaining five plates in this volume refer to William Hunt. Plate XXIII. is a characteristic portrait of the artist, founded on a photograph in possession of Mr. Allen. The other four plates are reproductions of drawings by Hunt. The Illustrated Edition of the Notes (1880) also gave four drawings by Hunt. One of them is included in our four—the "Bird's Nest and May Blossom," which is at Brantwood (Plate XXVI.). The drawing of "Plums" (Plate XXV.) is also at Brantwood. "The Eavesdropper" (Plate XXIV.) is in the possession of Mr. E. F. Quilter, and "The Blessing" (Plate XXVII.) in that of Mr. James Orrock. The drawings are here reproduced in photogravure by kind permission of the owners.

E. T. C.

[1] *Guide to an Exhibition of Drawings and Sketches by . . . deceased Artists of the English School, principally acquired between 1895 and 1901.* Printed by order of the Trustees, 1901, p. 61.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PART I

ACADEMY NOTES

(1855–1859 AND 1875)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

I

NOTES

ON SOME OF

THE PRINCIPAL PICTURES

EXHIBITED IN THE ROOMS OF

THE ROYAL ACADEMY

1855

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS"

WITH A SUPPLEMENT

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 65 CORNHILL
1855

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of the first number of Ruskin's *Academy Notes* there were three editions, as follow :—

First Edition (1855).—The title-page was as shown here (p. 3), except that the words "With a Supplement" were omitted. An octavo pamphlet, stitched and without wrappers, pp. 30. Half-title, with imprint on the reverse ("London : A. and G. A. Spottiswoode, New Street Square"), pp. 1–2; title-page, with blank reverse, pp. 3–4; preface (here pp. 5–6), pp. 5–6; text of the notes, pp. 7–30. No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. At the end two pages of advertisements of "Works by Mr. Ruskin" were inserted. Issued on June 1, 1855; price Sixpence.

Second Edition (1855).—This has the words "Second Edition" added to the title-page, but is otherwise a verbatim reprint of the First. Issued on June 18.

Third Edition (1855).—The words "Third Edition. With a Supplement" were added to the title-page; the Supplement occupied ten additional pages (31–40); and the two pages of advertisements were omitted; otherwise the pamphlet was identical with the two previous editions. Issued on July 1.

Reprinted in 1902 in *Ruskin on Pictures*, vol. ii. pp. 1–34. The first volume of that collection has been described at Vol. XIII. p. 93. The title-page of the second was the same except for the substitution of the words: "Vol. II. | Academy Notes | Notes on Prout and Hunt." Crown 8vo, pp. xviii. + 375. The Preface by the editor (E. T. Cook) occupies pp. v.–xiii.; Contents, pp. xv.–xvi.; List of Plates, pp. xvii.–xviii.; the Text of Academy Notes, pp. 1–264; Notes on Prout and Hunt, pp. 271–350; General Index, pp. 351–375. There are editorial notes under the text, and on pp. 265–270 "Some Further Notes on Millais" (collected from Ruskin's other works); the substance of these, as well as of the editor's preface, is incorporated in the present volume. Issued (December 22, 1902) in the usual green cloth, price 7s. 6d. net (2000 copies printed).

The publication of the *Notes* in 1855 inspired the production of a privately-printed pamphlet (8vo, pp. 61) in verse. The title-page is :—

> Notes | on so much of The Catalogue of the present | Exhibition of the Royal Academy | as relates to the | Works of the Members | with a Report of the | Private View | and the | Dinner | 1855 | (*Not published*).

In the Introduction the anonymous author attacks "Buskin"; the following lines will show the style :—

> "Though Buskin has put forth his Fiat
> In fair poetic prose,
> Yet Buskin has new lamps to shy at
> Which some small stones I now let fly at."

Reviews appeared in *The Globe*, June 18 (see below, p. 34); the *Art Journal*, July, N.S., vol. i. p. 219, and August, *ibid.*, pp. 237–239 (a very fierce review); the *Quarterly Review*, March 1856, vol. 98, pp. 384–433 (an article on *Modern Painters* also : see below, p. 44).]

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

I AM often asked by my friends to mark for them the pictures in the Exhibitions of the year which appear to me the most interesting, either in their good qualities or their failure. I have determined, at last, to place the circular letter which on such occasions I am obliged to write, within reach of the general public. Twenty years of severe labour,[1] devoted exclusively to the study of the principles of Art, have given me the right to speak on the subject with a measure of confidence; but it will be found that in the following pages, few statements are made on my own authority, and that I have limited myself to pointing out simple facts with respect to each picture, leaving to the reader the power of verifying such statements for himself. No criticism is of any value which does not enable the spectator, in his own person, to understand, or to detect, the alleged merit or unworthiness of the picture; and the true work of a critic is not to make his hearer believe him, but agree with him.

Whatever may be their abstract truth, the following remarks have at least in them the virtue of *entire* impartiality. Among the painters whose works are spoken of, the greater number are absolutely unknown to me; some are my friends, and some quite other than friends. But the reader would be strangely deceived who, from the tone of the criticism, should endeavour to guess to which class the painter belonged. It might, indeed, be alleged that there is some unfairness in fastening on the faults of one or two works, not grosser in error than many around them; but

[1] [He thus calculates from 1835 when he was 16. He wrote the reply to *Blackwood*, in defence of Turner, in 1836: see Vol. III. p. 635.]

Digitized by Google

it would have been tedious to expose all the fallacies in the Academy, and I believe it will be found, besides, that the notice of the particular picture is nearly always justified, if not by excess of demerit, at least by excess of pretension.

I have been hindered, by unforeseen pressure of work,[1] from noticing, this year, any but pictures in the Academy, and have perhaps missed several there which ought to have been favourably distinguished; but I hope henceforward to furnish, every year, in the same form, some notes on the leading pictures in all the Exhibitions, which may be of use in guiding the public to the discernment and acceptance of those unobtrusive truths of which our modern Idealism has so long repressed the pursuit, and withheld the appreciation.

May 29th, 1855.

[1] [Principally, his teaching at the Working Men's College: see Vol. V. p. xxxviii., and see *ibid.*, pp. xlix.–li.]

Digitized by Google

NOTES, ETC.

35. AZALEAS. (*Miss A. F. Mutrie.*[1])

There are two other works by this artist in the rooms, Nos. 304 ["Primula and Rhododendron"] and 306 ["Orchids"]. It would be well to examine them at once in succession, lest they should afterwards be passed carelessly when the mind has been interested by pictures of higher aim; for all these flower paintings are remarkable for very lovely, pure, and yet unobtrusive colour—perfectly tender, and yet luscious—(note the purple rose leaves especially), and a richness of petal texture that seems absolutely scented. The arrangement is always graceful—the backgrounds sometimes too faint. I wish this very accomplished artist would paint some banks of flowers in wild country, just as they grow, as she appears slightly in danger of falling into too artificial methods of grouping.

68. EL PASEO, the property of Her Majesty the Queen. (*J. Phillip.*[2])

[1] [Miss Annie Feray Mutrie (1826–1893) studied at the Manchester School of Design, then under the direction of George Wallis. She first exhibited at the Academy in 1851. She was younger sister of Miss M. D. Mutrie (see p. 54).]

[2] [John Phillip (1817–1867) went to Spain for the sake of his health in 1851, and thenceforward made a speciality of Spanish subjects. He was elected A.R.A. in 1857 and R.A. in 1859. His work had for some years attracted the favour of the Court, and he painted several ceremonial pictures by command. This picture of "The Promenade" now hangs in the King's private rooms at Windsor Castle. A characteristic example of Phillip's Spanish subjects may be seen in the Tate Gallery, No. 1534, "The Promenade."]

Digitized by Google

76. Mrs. Coleridge. (*W. Boxall, A.*[1])

The juxtaposition of these two pictures looks very like deliberate malice; but it may read an excellent lesson to the two artists. Mr. Phillip's fault is excess of decision and force; Mr. Boxall's, excess of delicacy and tenderness. Mr. Phillip's work, by the contrast, has become vulgar, and Mr. Boxall's evanescent.

Looked at separately, there is much merit in both paintings; but the truth, so painfully brought out, is still a truth with respect to both. Mr. Phillip has much to subdue, and much to refine, before he will be able to represent not merely the piquancy, but the wayward, half melancholy mystery of Spanish beauty; and Mr. Boxall has much to complete, much to *de*fine, before he can hope that his graceful idea of the English lady will be in anywise justly expressed. The same may be said of all his works in this exhibition. Refined in expression, though in some cases looking too stiffly straightforward, the faces he paints are still little more than shadows—the reflection of the truth in a cloudy mirror. The dresses are even less than this; in fact nothing more than a filling of the canvas with vague sweeps of the brush, issuing, when there is any momentary distinctness, in pure fallacy; as in the portrait before us, where the shadow of the chain on the neck, which, to accord with the faintness of the rest of the drawing, should have been so tender as hardly to be perceived, is nearly as black as the chain itself—and this equally on the flesh tint and on the white dress!

Mr. Boxall will never satisfy himself, nor do his real talents justice, until he is content to paint, unaffectedly, as far as he is able, things as they are. It is not time nor labour that is wanting: there are as many touches on this

[1] [Sir William Boxall (1800–1879) was elected A.R.A. in 1852 and R.A. in 1864. He was Director of the National Gallery from 1865 to 1874, and was knighted in 1871. In *Præterita* (ii. ch. vii. § 143), Ruskin describes conversations at Venice in 1845 with Boxall, "a much-regarded friend."]

Digitized by Google

ghostly gown as there are on one of Velasquez's portraits, head and all, which looks living enough to stalk the next moment into the middle of the room.

77. COLIN.[1] (*J. C. Hook, A.*)

There is a sweet feeling in this choice of landscape subject, as in most of the other works of this painter. The execution is flimsy and imperfect, and must be much bettered before his pictures can rank as works of any importance. He has, however, a very interesting figure-subject in the middle room, of which more in its place.[2]

78. THE WRESTLING IN "AS YOU LIKE IT." (*D. Maclise, R.A.*[3])

Very bad pictures may be divided into two principal classes—those which are weakly or passively bad, and which are to be pitied and passed by; and those which are energetically or actively bad, and which demand severe reprobation, as wilful transgressions of the laws of all good art. The picture before us is of the last class. Mr. Maclise

[1] [A figure in a landscape, called in the catalogue "Colin thou kenst, the southerne shepheard's boye" (from Spenser's "Shepheards' Calender"). Of Mr. Hook's work in later years Ruskin wrote with increasing appreciation (see pp. 102, 228). In *Modern Painters*, he said that "the designs of J. C. Hook are, perhaps, the only works of the kind in existence which deserve to be mentioned in connection with the pastorals of Wordsworth and Tennyson" (vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vi. § 23). In the Academy of 1871 he "found nothing deserving of notice otherwise [than in condemnation], except Mr. Hook's always pleasant sketches from fisher-life, and Mr. Pettie's graceful and powerful, though too slightly painted, study from Henry IV." (*Aratra Pentelici*, preface). See also *Art of England*, § 209. Mr. Hook, born in 1819, was elected A.R.A. in 1851, R.A. in 1860. He is represented in the Tate Gallery by four pictures, Nos. 1512–1514 and 1598.]

[2] [See p. 25.]

[3] [Daniel Maclise (1806–1870) was the popular artist of his time; his vogue may be gathered alike from the acres of canvas which he was commissioned to paint, and from the appreciation of contemporaries (see, *e.g.*, Mr. Frith's *Autobiography*, vol. i. ch. xi.). He was elected A.R.A. in 1834 and R.A. in 1840; in 1865 he declined the Presidency. Ruskin was not among his admirers; "nothing," he wrote in *Modern Painters*, "can more completely demonstrate the total ignorance of the public of all that is great or valuable in Shakespeare than their universal admiration of Maclise's 'Hamlet'" (Vol. III. p. 82 *n.*; see also pp. 51 *n.*, 619 *n.*). Maclise is represented in the Tate Gallery by Nos. 422 and 423; in the National Portrait Gallery by a portrait of Dickens; and by three pictures in the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum. For a notice of his work in the Houses of Parliament, see below, pp. 473, 488.]

Digitized by Google

has keen sight, a steady hand, good anatomical knowledge of the human form, and good experience of the ways of the world. If he draws ill, or imagines ungracefully, it is because he is resolved to do so. He has seen enough of society to know how a Duke generally sits—how a young lady generally looks at a strange youth who interests her; and it is by vulgar choice, not vulgar ignorance, that he makes the enthroned Duke straddle like a village actor, and the young lady express her interest by a cool, unrestrained, and steady stare. It is not worth while to analyze the picture thoroughly, but let us glance at the two opponent figures—Charles and Orlando. The spectator can certainly see nothing in this "Charles" but a grim, sinister, sinewy monster, wholly devoid of all gentleness or humanity. Was Shakespeare's Charles such an one? So far from it, that into his mouth is put the first description of the love of Rosalind and Celia—"The Duke's daughter, her cousin, so loves her, being ever from their cradles bred together, that she would have followed her exile, or have died to stay behind her—never two ladies loved as they do." So far from it, that he comes to Oliver especially to warn him against allowing his brother to wrestle with him. "Your brother is but young and tender; for your love, I would be loath to foil him." Then, on Oliver's execrable slander of Orlando, poor honest Charles is "heartily glad I came hither; if he come to-morrow, I'll give him his payment"; this being not in cruelty, but in honest indignation at Orlando's ascribed villainy; nevertheless, when the trial comes, although flushed with victory, and haughty in his supposed strength, there is no bitterness in his question—"Where is this young gallant?" Poor Charles is as much slandered here by the painter as Orlando was by his brother. Well, but what of Orlando himself? He folds his hands, and turns up his eyes like a lover in his last appeal to his lady's mercy. What was the actual fact? Orlando had been but that instant called before the princesses; he had never seen them before in his life. He is a man of firm,

Digitized by Google

calm, and gloomy character—the sadness having been induced by injustice; he has no hope, no thought of Rosalind or her love, at this moment; he has challenged the wrestler in quiet resolve to try with him the strength of his youth —little caring what comes of it. He answers the princesses with deep and grateful courtesy, but with a despairing carelessness of his fate—"If I be foiled, there is but one shamed that was never gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing." Imagine the calmness and steady melancholy of the man who would speak thus, and then compare the sentimental grimace (as of a fashionable tenor in a favourite aria) of the Orlando in the picture.

Next to pass from imagination of character to realization of detail. Mr. Maclise is supposed to draw well and realize minute features accurately. Now, the fact is, that this work has every fault usually attributed to the Pre-Raphaelites, without one of their excellences. The details are all so sharp and hard that the patterns on the dresses force the eye away from the faces, and the leaves on the boughs call to us to count them. But not only are they all drawn distinctly, they are all drawn *wrong*.

Take a single instance in a simple thing. On the part of the hem of the Duke's robe which crosses his right leg are seven circular golden ornaments, and two halves, Mr. Maclise being evidently unable to draw them as *turning* away *round* the side of the dress. Now observe, wherever there is a depression or fold in the dress, those circles ought to contract into narrow upright ovals. There *is* such a depression at the first next the half one on the left, and that circle ought to have become narrowed. Instead of which it actually widens itself! The second is right. Then the third, reaching the turn to the shade, and all those beyond it, ought to have been in narrowed perspective—but they all remain full circles! And so throughout the ornament. Imagine the errors which a draughtsman who

Digitized by Google

could make such a childish mistake as this must commit in matters that really need refined drawing, turns of leaves, and so on!

But to pass from drawing to light and shade. Observe, the light falls from the left, on all the figures but that of the two on the extreme left. These two, for the sake of effect, are in "accidental shadow."[1] Good; but why then has Oliver, in the brown, a sharp light on the left side of his nose! and on his brown mantle? Reflected lights, says the apologist. From what? Not from the red Charles, who is five paces at least in advance of Oliver; and if from the golden dress of the courtier, how comes it that the nearer and brighter golden dress of the Duke casts *no reflected light* whatever on the yellow furs and red hose of the wrestler, infinitely more susceptible of such a reflex than the dress of Oliver?

It would be perfectly easy to analyze the whole picture in this manner; but I pass to a pleasanter subject of examination.

90. An Armenian Lady: Cairo. (*J. F. Lewis.*[2])

It is very instructive to pass immediately from Maclise's work to this. Both propose the complete rendering of details: but with Maclise all is inherently wrong; here everything is exquisitely, ineffably right. I say *ineffably*—for no words are strong enough to express the admirable skill and tenderness of pencilling and perception shown in this picture. It is one of the first that I have seen by this master in oil, and I am rejoiced to find it quite equal in precision and purity to his best work in water-colour, while it is in a safer medium. The delicacy of the drawing of the palm in the distance, of the undulating perspective of

[1] [The technical term for effects caused otherwise than by ordinary daylight: see Fairholt's *Dictionary of Terms in Art.*]

[2] [John Frederick Lewis (1805–1876) was elected A.R.A. in 1859 and R.A. in 1865. Two characteristic pictures by him are in the Tate Gallery, Nos. 1405 and 1688; and two drawings are reproduced in Vol. XII. pp. 362, 364. For other references to him see those passages, and the note at Vol. III. p. 120. See also below, pp. 52, 73, 94, 130, 159, 218.]

Digitized by Google

the zigzags on the dress, and of the deep and fanciful local colouring of the vase, are all equally admirable. The face —infinitely laboured—fails slightly. The flesh tint is too blue—a fault into which the master has lately fallen from trying to reach impossible delicacy.

It is only to be regretted that this costly labour should be spent on a subject devoid of interest.

94. THE RIVER'S BANK. (*T. Creswick, R.A.*[1])

This, like most other of the landscapes hung on the line, is one of those works so characteristic of the English school, and so little creditable to them, in which everything is carelessly or ill painted—because it is in a landscape. Nothing is really *done*. The cows have imperfect horns and hides; the girl has an imperfect face and imperfect hands; the trees have imperfect leaves; the sky imperfect clouds; the water imperfect waves. The colour, of a heavy yellow with dim green, is worse than imperfect; for colour must either be right—that is, infinitely beautiful; or wrong —that is, *less* than beautiful. All tame and dead colour is *false* colour.

120. BEATRICE. (*C. L. Eastlake, P.R.A.*[2])

An imitation of the Venetians, on the supposition that the essence of Venetian painting consisted in method:

[1] [Thomas Creswick (1811–1869) was elected A.R.A. in 1842 and R.A. in 1851. At a period earlier than the present criticism, Ruskin instanced Creswick as a typical "modern painter" not of the first class, in the faithfulness of his study from nature, in contrast to the conventional untruthfulness in old masters such as Poussin. Creswick's is "the work of a man who has sought earnestly for truth: and who, with one thought or memory of nature in his heart, could look at the two landscapes, and receive Poussin's with ordinary patience? . . . Creswick has sweet feeling, and tries for the real green too, but, from want of science in his shadows, ends in green paint instead of green light" (*Modern Painters*, vol. i., Vol. III. pp. 591–592, 604). Pictures by Creswick may be seen at the Tate Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum.]

[2] [Sir Charles Lock Eastlake (1793–1865) was elected A.R.A. in 1827, R.A. in 1830, and P.R.A. in 1850. He was Keeper of the National Gallery from 1843 to 1847, and Director from 1855 till his death. Ruskin reviewed his "Materials for a History of Oil Painting" (1848) in the *Quarterly* (see Vol. XII. pp. 251–302, and see also Vol. III. p. 670. Pictures by Eastlake may be seen at the Tate Gallery and the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

Digitized by Google

issuing, as trusts in Method instead of Fact always must issue—in mere negation. Sir Charles Eastlake has power of rendering expression, if he would watch it in human beings—and power of drawing form, if he would look at the form to be drawn. But when, because Giorgione and Titian draw broadly, and sometimes make their colours look broken, he supposes that all he has to do is to get a broken breadth, he ends, as all imitators must end, in a rich inheritance of the errors of his original, without its virtues. Titian and Giorgione have a slight tendency to flatness; but Giorgione's G Flat has accompaniments, Sir Charles's C Flat stands alone.

The real source of the error may be sufficiently seen in the distance; Titian paints his distances in pure colour—but at least indicates what is grass and what is stone. The distant ground, here, with its white spot for a castle, is a mere space of dim brownish-green paint, which can by no possibility stand for grass, or moss, or any other natural thing. It seems to me, however, that there are some points in the execution of the picture, considered as an example of certain textures, which are instructive. The whole is careful, and the draperies well cast. But who is the lady? Dante's Beatrice, or Benedict's? She can hardly be either: her face indicates little piety, and less wit.

121. Flitting Shadows. (*H. Jutsum.*[1])

Not particularly remarkable, but good as an instance of tolerably clear and firm drawing. The clouds and ferns are both exceedingly well articulated.

136. "Come, Rest in this Bosom," etc. (*A. Egg, A.*[2])

Mr. Egg has considerable power of expression, and though this subject of prison sentiment is both painful, useless, and hackneyed, he appears to have something like

[1] [Henry Jutsum (1816–1869), a pupil of James Stark, first exhibited at the Academy, 1836; member of the New Water-Colour Society, 1843.]

[2] [Augustus Egg (1816–1863) was elected A.R.A. in 1848 and R.A. in 1860. He is represented in the Tate Gallery by two pictures, Nos. 444 and 1385. "He was,"

Digitized by Google

serious purpose in his work. But he will never be a great painter until he has a greater respect for plain truth. There is in this picture one of the most wonderful fallacies that ever painter ventured. Observe the shadows of the bars of the window. They fall with intense sharpness on the wall at the back of the bed. Now, to get there, the sun must have come *in* at the window; it did not get through the keyhole. And as it came in at the window, it must have cast the first portions of those shadows *from the ends of the bars themselves.* But, actually, at the bars there are no shadows at all! It is dim daylight, shadowless, at the window itself. Hot sunshine, ten feet within the prison! The state of mind in which a painter could firmly carry out such a fallacy is wholly adverse to all real progress.

It is better to walk at once into the next room, in order to examine the more important work by this artist, "The Life and Death of Buckingham," No. 349. The story is worth telling, and there is vigorous painting in both pictures; but the figures which surround Buckingham in his riot are not of the class which could have entertained a man either of wit or breeding. Vice, unhappily, is not always repulsive at first sight, and the Tempter has not usually his bargain quite so cheap as he would have had of the Duke on such terms. The head of the dying Buckingham is forcible, but quite unfinished.

141. THE MITHERLESS BAIRN. (*T. Faed.*[1])

The story is well told, and the figure of the orphan child very affecting. But the painting is throughout the most commonplace Wilkieism—white spots everywhere. I expected far higher things from this painter, whose work eight years ago was more modest and powerful than it is now.

says Holman Hunt (to whom in his early days Egg gave encouragement and assistance), "a pictorial dramatist of true power; a keen reader and renderer of human expression to the very realm of poetic inspiration, if not of imaginative interpretation."—*Contemporary Review*, April 1886.]

[1] [Thomas Faed (1826–1900) was elected A.R.A. in 1859, and R.A. in 1864. Characteristic examples of his art are in the Tate Gallery, Nos. 1525–1527.]

Digitized by Google

142. Dutch Boats: Zuider Zee. (*C. Stanfield, R.A.*[1])

A fair example of Stanfield; but I never understand, in the accepted types of marine painting, why there is no distinction between the Foam and the Water. In the sea there is either yeasty foam or smooth surface; but in all marine paintings the waves are merely touched upon with little oblong strokes of white, which express neither water nor spray. Observe those in this picture at the boat's bow.

149. Lear Recovering his Reason at the Sight of Cordelia. (*J. R. Herbert, R.A.*[2])

As No. 78 [p. 9] furnished us with an instance of the class of picture which is Actively bad, we have here an equally important instance of the Passively bad; which, had it been in a less prominent place, might kindly have been passed without notice; but, since it is thus recommended to the public by its position, it must needs be examined.

In the whole compass of Shakespeare's conceptions, the two women whom he has gifted with the deepest souls are Cordelia and Virgilia.[3] All his other women can speak what is in them. These two cannot. The "Nothing, my lord," of Cordelia, and the "gracious silence" of Virgilia, are the everlasting seals set by the Master of the human heart upon the most sacred writing of its folded and golden leaves.

[1] [William Clarkson Stanfield (1793–1867) was elected A.R.A. in 1832 and R.A. in 1835. Ruskin always ranked him among the best marine painters of England: see Vol. III. pp. 226, 534, Vol. XIII. p. 31, and for other references, General Index. Stanfield's work may be studied in several examples at the Tate Gallery and Victoria and Albert Museum.]

[2] [John Rogers Herbert (1810–1890), who did some damage to his reputation in the later years of his life by exhibiting works of singular weakness, was elected A.R.A. in 1841 and R.A. in 1846. For the decoration of the Houses of Parliament he was commissioned to paint, in fresco, "King Lear disinheriting Cordelia" (now hopelessly decayed) in the Upper Waiting Hall, and also nine subjects illustrative of Human Justice for the Peers' Robing Room. Of these the "Moses" is generally considered the best, and it is also the best preserved. A picture by Herbert, "Sir Thomas More and his Daughter" (1844), is in the National collection, now lent to Chester.]

[3] [Compare *Sesame and Lilies*, § 56. For Cordelia's "Nothing, my lord," see *King Lear*, i. 1; and for Virgilia's "gracious silence," *Coriolanus*, ii. 1; the latter passage is cited, and commented upon, in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 227), and in *Fiction, Fair and Foul*, § 65.]

Digitized by Google

Shakespeare himself could not find words to tell what was in these women. And now, cast down at her father's feet, the alabaster vase is broken—the house of life is filled with the odour of the ointment—all Cordelia is poured forth in that infinite "I am" of fulfilled love.* Do but think of it for one quiet instant. Think of the rejected creature, so long disallowed from daughter's word and act; unsistered also—all her sisterhood changed into pale flame of indignation—now at last, in consummation of all sorrow, and pity, and shame, and thankfulness, and horror, and hope long delayed, watching the veil grow thin that in those eyes, wasted with grief, was still drawn between her father's soul and hers. Think of it! As for imagining it — perhaps Dante might have imagined it, with the winds of paradise yet upon his brow. As for painting it——

And yet, in the midst of the Royal Academy Rooms of England, and in the midst of the nineteenth century, that profile of firwood, painted buff, with a white spot in the corner of the eye, does verily profess to be a painting of it.

It is a thing not a little to be pondered upon, that the men who attempt these highest things are always those who cannot even do the least things well. Around the brow of this firwood figure there is a coronet, and in the coronet four jewels. I thought that, according to Royal Academy principles, in a "High Art" picture,[1] this Rundell and Bridge[2] portion of it should have been a little less

* "I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cordelia. And so I am; *I am.*"
(Act iv. sc. 7.)

[1] [For this phrase, see Vol. V. p. 19 *n.*]

[2] [Rundell and Bridge, long established on Ludgate Hill, were the great silversmiths and jewellers of the time of George III. and George IV., and later. See Hood's "Miss Kilmansegg":—

"The golden knives, and the golden spoons,
The gems that sparkled like fairy boons,
It was one of the Kilmansegg's own saloons
But look'd like Rundell and Bridge's!"

See also *Lothair* (ch. xxxiii.): "Flaxman worked for Rundell and Bridge in the old days, one of the principal causes of their success. Your Lordship's gold service was supplied by Rundell and Bridge." Another designer employed by the firm was Pugin (see Eastlake's *History of the Gothic Revival*, p. 147).]

Digitized by Google

conspicuous. However, as we find these unideal emeralds and rubies thus condescendingly touched, let us see *how* they are touched. Each stone has a white spot, or high light, upon it. Now, that flash is always the reflection of the highest light to which the jewel is turned; and here, in a tent, it must be of an opening in the tent on the left-hand side. Now, as the jewels are set round the brow, each in a different position, each would reflect this tent door from a different spot of its surface. This change in the position of the reflection would be one of the principal means by which Nature would indicate the curve of the coronet. Now, look at the painting. Every gem has actually the high light in the same spot, on the left-hand side, all round the brow!

The dimness of pictorial capacity indicated by such a blunder as this is very marvellous. For a painter of the slightest power, even though he had not drawn the gems from Nature, would infallibly have varied the flash, for his own pleasure, and in an instinctive fulfilment of the eternal law of change.

It is nevertheless a fact that, although from some peculiar idiosyncrasy not comprehending the passage in *King Lear*, Mr. Herbert has feeling; and if he would limit his work to subjects of the more symbolic and quietly religious class, which truly move him, and would consider himself by no means a great master, but a very incipient student, and paint everything from the fact and life faithfully, he would be able to produce works of some value.

159. Sir Robert Harry Inglis.[1] (*G. Richmond.*[2])

A very interesting portrait of a good man by a good painter. The attitude, as characteristic of Sir Robert, is admirably chosen; but the face, though it has all the

[1] [Inglis (1786–1855) was for many years M.P. for the University of Oxford. He took a prominent part in the political controversies of the time as a Tory and strong Churchman, and was exceedingly popular in the House of Commons. He was also Antiquary of the Royal Academy. Ruskin was acquainted with him; see Vol. III. p. xliv. *n.* Richmond's portrait was painted for the Bodleian Library at Oxford.]

[2] [George Richmond (1809–1896) was elected A.R.A. in 1857 and R.A. in 1866. Several of Richmond's portraits may be seen in the National Portrait Gallery:

Digitized by Google

gentleness, has hardly the vivacity, of Sir Robert's look of welcome. The chief fault of this portrait is the mistiness of the accessories on the right hand. I am sorry to see Mr. Richmond countenancing the false, though of late Parliamentary, persuasion, that every statesman's proper element is Fog; and it was a poor compliment, both to Sir Robert Inglis and to himself, to suppose that the portrait would not be sufficiently interesting, unless he subdued the collateral interest of the joint-stool.

161. ROYAL PRISONERS: 1650. (*C. W. Cope, R.A.*[1])

A very beautiful and well-chosen subject,[2] not ill painted. The spectator will see it to better advantage, if with his hand he will hide the guard's helmet, which projects into the light like the beak of a canoe, and appears, for a moment, to be the principal subject.

181. CHRISTABEL. (*W. Dyce, R.A.*[3])

An example of one of the false branches of Pre-Raphaelitism, consisting in imitation of the old religious masters. This head is founded chiefly on reminiscence of Sandro Botticelli. The ivy leaves at the side are as elaborate as in the true school, but are quite false both in colour and shade. There is some sweet expression in the face.

some in oils, others in chalks. Ruskin preferred Richmond's work in the latter vehicle:—

> "I am very sorry," he wrote to his father (Turin, August 11, 1858), "he feels, or felt, the unsuccessful oil campaign so much; because the whole failure resulted from easily avoidable mistakes. He may paint superb portraits in oil yet, if he will only accept the Awful laws of oil, and act on the knowledge, which I am sure he possesses. He was hoping that the Fates which rule colour would have been gentle with him, because he has such sweet and right feeling; but the Fates have limbs of iron and hearts of fire and cannot be soothed nor blended."

In the Tate Gallery is a Raphaelesque picture by Richmond, painted when he was eighteen (No. 1492). In 1840 Richmond was in Rome, where he made the acquaintance of the Ruskins: see *Præterita*, ii. ch. ii. For Richmond's water-colour portrait of Ruskin, full-length figure, see the frontispiece to Vol. III.]

[1] [Charles West Cope (1811–1890), historical painter, was elected A.R.A. in 1843 and R.A. in 1848. He executed some of the frescoes for the Houses of Parliament, but these are now in a very bad condition. Of his smaller works there are good specimens in the Victoria and Albert Museum.]

[2] [Princess Elizabeth lying dead, and her brother, Prince Henry, at Carisbrook Castle.]

[3] [William Dyce (1806–1864) was elected A.R.A. in 1844 and R.A. in 1848. For a more favourable criticism in a later year, see p. 98. Dyce is represented in the

Digitized by Google

199. A Church Door. (*J. D. Luard.*[1])

A faithful little study, very refreshing among the artificialnesses with which it is surrounded.

201. Penserosa. (*C. W. Cope, R.A.*)

The young lady appears to be reading, may possibly be thinking, is certainly passing under a Norman arch, and is very pretty. This *ensemble* is interesting, but had better have been put into the architectural room, as it may materially promote the erection of Norman arches in the gardens of the metropolis, for the better performance of pensive appearances to morning visitors.

228. In Betchworth Park. (*W. F. Witherington, R.A.*[2])

240. The Bird Keeper. (*R. Redgrave, R.A.*[3])

We have here two interesting examples of another fallacious condition of landscape — that which pretends to Pre-Raphaelite distinctness of detail; but is in all detail industriously wrong.[4] In Creswick's work the touches represent nothing; here they represent perpetual error, assuming that all leaves of trees may be represented by oval, sharp-pointed touches of yellow or green—as if leaves had not their perspectives, shadows, and changes of hue like everything else! There is great appearance of fidelity to nature in these works, but there is none in reality; they are mere mechanical accumulations of similar touches, as a sempstress mechanically accumulates similar stitches. If the

Tate Gallery by two characteristic pictures, Nos. 1407, 1426. He was instrumental in calling Ruskin's attention to the work of the Pre-Raphaelites: see Vol. XII. p. xlv.]

[1] [John Dalbiac Luard (1830–1860) originally held a commission in the army, which he left to become a pupil of John Phillip.]

[2] [William Frederick Witherington (1785–1865) became A.R.A. in 1830 and R.A. in 1840. His earlier pictures were landscapes.]

[3] [Richard Redgrave, C.B. (1804–1888), exhibited at the Academy from 1825 onwards, first genre pictures, afterwards landscapes; R.A., 1851. From 1847 to 1875 Redgrave filled official positions in the Art Department, and from 1857 to 1880 was Surveyor of Crown Pictures. For a reference to Redgrave's "delicate domesticity," see Vol. III. p. 675. In *Richard Redgrave: a Memoir compiled from his Diary* (1891), a few reminiscences of Ruskin may be found.]

[4] [For the references here, see above, pp. 11, 13.]

Digitized by Google

spectator desires to know the difference between right and wrong in this matter, let him first examine Mr. Witherington's oval touches, and then cross the room to No. 321 [p. 24], in which the flowers in the window are truly and properly painted, and look at the way the leaves are set and worked there; and if it be supposed that this is only to be done in a cabinet picture, the question is well worth settling at once by merely walking out of the Academy into the National Gallery next door,[1] and looking at the leaves which crown the Bacchus, and the little dancing faun, in Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne" [No. 35], in which every turn of the most subtle perspective, and every gradation of colour, is given with the colossal ease and power of the consummate master. Examine, further, the vine-leaves above on the right, and the flowers in the foreground, and you will return to the Academy with an eye so instructed, as hardly thenceforward to accept, in such matters, fallacies for facts.

239. THE BROKEN WINDOW: WHO THREW THE STONE? (*W. H. Knight.*[2])

This picture does not catch the eye at a distance, but, on looking close, there will be found exquisite and careful painting in it. The fish on the tray on the boy's head are amongst the best bits of cabinet painting in the room.

244. "THE MOORLAND": TENNYSON.[3] (*J. W. Inchbold.*[4])

This is, as far as I have seen, the only thoroughly good landscape in the rooms of the Academy. It is more

[1] [The Royal Academy was at this time housed in the same building with the National Gallery. Over one of the entrance doors to the Gallery in Trafalgar Square the words "Royal Academy of Arts" may still be seen. For other references to "Bacchus and Ariadne," see below, p. 302, and Vol. III. p. 268 *n.*]

[2] [William Henry Knight (1823–1863); first exhibited at the Academy 1846. "The Broken Window," the picture noticed above, was engraved in the *Art Journal*, Aug. 1865.]

[3] ["O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!"—*Locksley Hall.*]

[4] [John William Inchbold (1830–1888) was one of the painters who carried the principles of Pre-Raphaelitism into the field of landscape. A picture of his in an earlier exhibition had attracted Ruskin's attention (see p. 38, below); he sought out

Digitized by Google

exquisite in its finish of lichenous rock painting than any work I have ever seen. Its colour, throughout, is as forcible as it is subtle and refined; and although it appears as yet to display little power of invention, the appreciation of truth in it is so intense, that a single inch of it is well worth all the rest of the landscapes in the room. It may well be supposed that my knowledge of this picture was not obtained by study of it in its present position. Those who happen to be interested in the system of hanging now pursued in the Academy, will do well to verify my statement by an examination of the picture after the exhibition closes.

There are two other works by this artist, in the outer rooms: 1075, ineffective, but yet full of excellent work and right feeling; and 1162, exceedingly beautiful.[1]

282. THE RESCUE. (*J. E. Millais, A.*[2])

It is the only *great* picture exhibited this year; but this is *very* great. The immortal element is in it to the full.

the young painter, gave him advice and encouragement, and introduced him to the work of Rossetti (see *Ruskin, Rossetti, Pre-Raphaelitism*, pp. 79, 96). Inchbold also made the acquaintance of Mr. Swinburne, who has published a memorial poem upon him. Coventry Patmore was another admirer; see his *Life* by B. Champneys, ii. 169. There is a picture by Inchbold in the Tate Gallery, No. 1477, which also is a moorland scene. In 1856 Inchbold was in Switzerland, and Ruskin saw something of him there.]

[1] [1075, "At Bolton"; 1162, "A Study: in March."]

[2] [The career of Millais (1829–1896) is too well known to need any notice here. His early friendship with Ruskin and Ruskin's appreciation of his work have already been noticed in Vol. XII. pp. xviii.–xlix. The critic's enthusiasm continued through 1855, the year of the present *Notes*, and 1856 (see p. 56 below.) It was not until 1857, long after their intimacy had ceased, that Ruskin noted a change in the painter's work: "it is not merely Fall, it is Catastrophe" (p. 107). In 1859 he continued to sound a note of warning, but also extolled the painter's powers (p. 214). Millais's criticism of his critic at this period is interesting: "Ruskin will be disgusted this year, for all the rubbish he has been praising before being sent into the Royal Academy has now bad places. There is a wretched work like a photograph of some place in Switzerland, evidently painted under his guidance, for he seems to have lauded it up sky-high; and that is *just where it is* in the miniature room! He does not understand my work, which is now too broad for him to appreciate, and I think his eye is only fit to judge the portraits of insects" (*Life and Letters of Millais*, i. 342). The "wretched work like a photograph," was Brett's "Val d'Aosta" (see below, p. 234). In the *Notes* of 1875, Ruskin returned to the charge against what he considered Millais's lapse from the ideals and methods of his youth (p. 302). His later criticisms, including emphatic tributes to the master's genius and appreciation even of his "free-hand painting," are collected lower down (see pp. 495, 496).]

Digitized by Google

It is easily understood, and the public very generally understand it. Various small cavils have been made at it, chiefly by conventionalists, who never ask how the thing is, but fancy for themselves how it ought to be. I have heard it said, for instance, that the fireman's arm should not have looked so black in the red light. If people would only try the experiment, they would find that near black, compared with other colours, is always black. Coals do not look red in a fire, but where they are red hot. In fact, the contrast between any dark colour and a light one, is always nearly the same, however high we raise the light that falls on both.[1] Paul Veronese often paints local colour darker in the lights than in the shadow, generally equal in both. The glow that is mixed with the blackness is here intensely strong; but, justly, does not destroy the nature of the blackness.

The execution of the picture is remarkably bold—in some respects imperfect. I have heard it was hastily finished; but, except in the face of the child kissing the mother, it could not be much bettered. For there is a true sympathy between the impetuousness of execution and the haste of the action.[2]

305. At the Opera. (*W. P. Frith, R.A.*[3])

There is great cleverness and successful realization, up to a certain point, in this picture, the work being very thoroughly done, as far as the painter sees what *is* to be

[1] [See further on this point, pp. 35–37, below.]

[2] [The origin of this picture and the circumstances in which it was painted are fully described in *The Life and Letters of Millais*, vol. i. pp. 247–257. Millais had taken great pains with the preliminary studies, but was behind-hand with the picture itself. "On the last day but one he began to work as soon as it was daylight, and worked on all through the night and following day until the van arrived for the picture. His friend Charles Collins sat up with him and painted the fire-hose, whilst Millais worked at other parts; and in the end a large piece of sheet-iron was placed on the floor, upon which a flaming brand was put and worked from amidst suffocating smoke." The picture is now in the collection of Mr. Holbrook Gaskell.]

[3] [William Powell Frith (*b.* 1819) began to exhibit at the Academy in 1840; was elected A.R.A. in 1844; and in 1852, R.A. His early pictures were of subjects from English literature. In 1854 he made his first great success, in subjects of modern life, with "Ramsgate Sands." For other references to Mr. Frith, see pp. 53, 161, 279, and *Ariadne Florentina*, § 140.]

Digitized by Google

done, and all very skilfully handled, down to the utmost seam of the white kid gloves. It is not a kind of painting which will ever bring great fame, or deserve it; but it is better than spurious "High Art."

321. THE WRITING LESSON. (*J. Collinson.*[1])

This is a very careful and beautiful study—the subject not interesting enough to render the picture attractive; but it is a good piece of work throughout, and there are not many pictures in the room of which this can be said.

355. A CONTRAST.[2] (*A. Solomon.*[3])

It is difficult to see this picture at the height at which it is placed, but it seems to me better than most of its class in the rooms; and the face of the invalid is very beautiful.

357. SCOTTISH PRESBYTERIANS: THE SERMON. (*J. Stirling.*)

A very noticeable picture, showing careful study and good discrimination of expression. But the painter cannot yet do all he wants to do; he should try to work more delicately, and not attempt so much at once.

[1] [James Collinson (*d.* 1881) was one of the seven original members of "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood" (see Vol. XII. p. xliii.) Of his minute methods of workmanship some account is given in W. M. Rossetti's *Præ-Raphaelite Diaries and Letters*, p. 223. To the *Germ* he contributed a mystical poem, entitled "The Child Jesus." In 1851 appeared his principal work, "An Incident in the Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary," in illustration of Kingsley's *Saint's Tragedy*. On becoming a convert to Roman Catholicism, Collinson resigned his membership in the brotherhood. His letter of resignation is printed in *Præ-Raphaelite Diaries*, p. 275. He spent the years 1852–1854 in a convent, but in 1855 resumed exhibiting at the Academy. Some interesting reminiscences of Collinson are given in Holman Hunt's papers on the brotherhood (*Contemporary Review*, May 1886).]

[2] [In the catalogue were the illustrative lines (from the *Second Part of Henry IV.*, iv. 4):—

"Will Fortune never come with both hands full?
Such are the poor in health; such are the rich,
That have abundance and enjoy it not."]

[3] [Abraham Solomon (1824–1862), whose work was thus praised by Ruskin, established his reputation two years later with "Waiting for the Verdict" (see p. 327).]

Digitized by Google

471. Fowl and Pigeons. (*W. Huggins.*[1])

There is excellent painting in pieces of this study; but as a whole it is incomplete, the background being wrong, and the parts out of harmony. The painter ought to work with the sternest self-denial, from corner to corner of his picture, completing everything from nature, near or distant, to the best of his power.

486. The Mother of Moses. (*J. C. Hook, A.*)

I alluded to this picture in noticing the landscape works by the same artist [p. 9]. This is very truly and thoughtfully conceived. It is interesting to consider how many "findings of Moses" have been painted, not one of which ever attempted to express this, the deepest note of passion in all the scene.[2] The princess and her maidens pleasantly surprised at finding a child among the reeds! this was all that the so-called great masters ever dreamed of. The modern painter is to be deeply thanked for his true and earnest thought; above all for the little Miriam, trotting by her mother's side with her rough harp, and pitcher hung by it, looking back, in her childish wisdom and fear, to see that the princess is not watching the burst of passion which might betray her mother.

545. St. Sebastian: During the Siege, July 1818. (*C. Stanfield, R.A.*)

A careful and good example of Stanfield's work. But persons who accuse the Pre-Raphaelites of faults in aerial perspective,[3] may perhaps be able to account, better than I can, for the fact that the foreground and the hill three miles off are precisely of the same colour.

[1] [William Huggins (1820–1884) was known in his native city as "the Liverpool Landseer."]

[2] [The full title of the picture was "The Gratitude of the Mother of Moses for the Safety of her Child." For Bible subjects "waiting to be painted," see Vol. V. p. 87.]

[3] [See Vol. XI. p. 59.]

Digitized by Google

569. CIMABUE'S MADONNA CARRIED IN PROCESSION THROUGH THE STREETS OF FLORENCE. (*F. Leighton.*[1])

This is a very important and very beautiful picture. It has both sincerity and grace, and is painted on the purest principles of Venetian art—that is to say, on the calm acceptance of the whole of nature, small and great, as, in its place, deserving of faithful rendering. The great secret of the Venetians was their simplicity. They were great colourists, not because they had peculiar secrets about oil and colour, but because, when they saw a thing red, they painted it red; and when they saw it blue, they painted it blue; and when they saw it distinctly, they painted it distinctly. In all Paul Veronese's pictures, the lace borders of the table-cloths or fringes of the dresses are painted with just as much care as the faces of the principal figures; and the reader may rest assured that in all great art it is so. Everything in it is done as well as it *can* be done. Thus, in the picture before us, in the background is the Church of San Miniato, strictly accurate in every detail; on the top of the wall are oleanders and pinks, as carefully painted as the church; the architecture of the shrine on the wall is well studied from thirteenth-century Gothic, and painted with as much care as the pinks; the dresses of the figures, very beautifully designed, are painted with as much care as the architecture; and the faces with as much care as the dresses—that is to say, all things, throughout, with as much care as the painter could bestow. It necessarily follows, that what is most difficult (*i.e.*, the faces) should be comparatively the worst done. But if they are done as well as the painter could do them, it is all we have to ask;

[1] [Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830–1896), was at this time little known in art circles in London, for he studied and worked abroad. He had been introduced to Ruskin by Browning (see Vol. V. p. xlv.) It was not till 1864 that he was elected A.R.A.; he became R.A. in 1868, and President in 1879. The "Cimabue" was bought by Queen Victoria, and made Leighton famous: the picture now hangs in the visitors' corridor, private apartments, Buckingham Palace. Other contemporary criticisms by high authorities may be read in D. G. Rossetti's *Letters to William Allingham*, and in Madox Brown's Diary printed in W. M. Rossetti's *Præ-Raphaelite Diaries and Letters*, p. 183. For the subject of the picture, see Vol. III. p. 644 *n*.

Digitized by Google

and modern artists are under a wonderful mistake in thinking that when they have painted faces ill, they make their picture more valuable by painting the dresses worse.

The painting before us has been objected to, because it seems broken up into bits. Precisely the same objection would hold, and in very nearly the same degree, against the best works of the Venetians. All faithful colourists' work, in figure-painting, has a look of sharp separation between part and part. I will not detain the reader by explaining *why* this is so, but he may convince himself of the fact by one walk through the Louvre, comparing the Venetian pictures in this respect with those of all other schools. Although, however, in common with all other works of its class, it is marked by these sharp divisions, there is no confusion in its arrangement. The principal figure is nobly principal, not by extraordinary light, but by its own pure whiteness; and both the master and the young Giotto attract full regard by distinction of form and face. The features of the boy are carefully studied, and are indeed what, from the existing portraits of him, we know those of Giotto must have been in his youth. The head of the young girl who wears the garland of blue flowers is also very sweetly conceived.

Such are the chief merits of the picture. Its defect is, that the equal care given to the whole of it, is not yet *care enough*. I am aware of no instance of a young painter, who was to be really great, who did not in his youth paint with intense effort and delicacy of finish. The handling here is much too broad; and the faces are, in many instances, out of drawing, and very opaque and feeble in colour. Nor have they, in general, the dignity of the countenance of the thirteenth century. The Dante especially is ill-conceived—far too haughty, and in no wise noble or thoughtful. It seems to me probable that Mr. Leighton has greatness in him, but there is no absolute proof of it in this picture; and if he does not, in succeeding years, paint far better, he will soon lose his power of painting so well.

Digitized by Google

594. Rome. (*D. Roberts, R.A.*[1])

This is a large architectural diagram, with the outlines executed sharply in black, the upper half being then painted brick-red, and the lower green-grey. (Note the distinctness of the mannerism in the *outlined* statues and pillars of the chapel in shade upon the right.) I can hardly understand how any man, devoting his time to painting, ever comes to suppose that a picture can be right which is painted in two colours! or by what reasoning he persuades himself that, because seen under the red light of sunset, the purple trunk of a stone pine, the white stucco of house walls, the scarlet of tiles, and the green of foliage, may all be of the same colour![2] Imagine a painting of a beautiful blue-eyed female face, by sunset, which represented its blue eyes, its nose, its cheeks, and its lips, all of the same brick-red!

Mr. Roberts was once in the habit of painting carefully-finished cabinet pictures, which were well composed (in the common sense), and fairly executed in the details. Had he continued these, painting more and more, instead of less and less, from nature, he might by this time have been a serviceable painter. Is it altogether too late to warn him that he is fast becoming nothing more than an Academician?

686. Trout Stream in Wales. (*J. Dearle.*)

Mr. Dearle's painting, considered as mere laying of colour, is perhaps better than that of any of the landscapists whose works are low enough to be visible, but his drawing of foliage is mannered and false. These trees are far more like moss than trees. He appears also to be confining himself

[1] [For David Roberts (1796–1864) see Vol. III. p. 223 *n.* Later on in these *Notes* (p. 35) Ruskin refers to his personal regard for the painter. In the *Notes* of 1859 he again contrasts Roberts's later work unfavourably with his earlier (p. 221). In the Tate Gallery, Roberts is represented by pictures painted in 1835 and 1848 respectively (Nos. 400, 401). In the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum there are several examples of his work both in oil and water-colour.]

[2] [See further on this point, p. 34, below.]

Digitized by Google

to one kind of scene—an indolent habit, which can end in nothing but mediocrity. His river scene last year was good,[1] for once; a duplicate of it is too much.

1334. THE GOOD HARVEST OF 1854. (*C. A. Collins.*[2])

There is much careful painting in this little study, and it was a wicked thing to put it into a room in which, while its modest subject could draw no attention, its good painting was of necessity utterly invisible.

1359. DRESSING FOR THE FIRST PARTY. (*A. C. Chisholme.*)

A very spirited picture, the best in execution (of its school) in the rooms.

1405. THE "LONDON GAZETTE," 1854. (*F. B. Barwell.*)

The Academy is, of course, filled with pictures of this kind of subject. This is, I think, the most earnest. It seems to be the only one which takes grief out of the drawing-room, and conceives it as independent of miniatures by Sir William Ross.[3]

There are several other pictures in the rooms respecting which I should have been glad to say a few words; but I

[1] [The river scene of 1854 was "Evening, on the Marchno, North Wales." Ruskin had praised it in his letter to the *Times* on the Pre-Raphaelites: see Vol. XII. p. 332.]

[2] [Charles Allston Collins (1828–1873), brother of Wilkie Collins, painted for some time in the style of the Pre-Raphaelites, exhibiting at the Academy from 1848–1855. In the latter year he gave up painting and devoted himself to literature, contributing to *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, then under the editorship of Charles Dickens, one of whose daughters he married. The picture noticed above is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, having been acquired under the Townshend bequest in 1869. Collins was a great friend of Millais, of whom he did a pencil drawing in 1850, now in the University Galleries at Oxford. He assisted Millais to finish the "Rescue," *ante*, p. 22, and stood as his model for the "Huguenot" and the "Black Brunswicker." For Ruskin's earlier notice of Collins' work, see Vol. XII. p. 320.]

[3] [Sir William Ross, R.A. (1794–1860), was at this time the fashionable miniature painter: for another mention of him see Vol. XII. p. 322.]

Digitized by Google

have no time to pursue the subject further, and must here leave the reader to his own investigations, only expressing my regret that absence from London prevents, for the present, my seeing a picture, of which a friend, in whose judgment I have great confidence, speaks with unusual enthusiasm—No. 514, "Early Spring Evening" (W. Davis).[1] My friend says it contains the "unity of perfect truth with invention." I cannot answer for its doing this, which would place it in the first rank of works of art; but, as it is hung in a place where it is not easily caught sight of, I have little doubt it must be a work of merit.[2]

Some surprise has been expressed to me by friends at the small number of pictures marked in the preceding Notes, as if, in passing by the others, I had intended to convey an impression of their being beneath criticism. I do not think that of all the pictures on the walls there are more than six or seven beneath criticism; but I do think that those which above are mentioned with praise are, on the whole, the best in the rooms, and that those which are blamed are fair examples of the worst: one or two omissions, made accidentally, in a somewhat hurried review, it is better, perhaps, thus late, than in nowise, to repair.

Of these the only one I seriously regretted was of the "Elgiva," by Miss J. M. Boyce[3] (No. 1295). The expression

[1] [See below, p. 32.]

[2] [Here the first and second editions of the pamphlet ended.]

[3] [This was the first exhibited work of Miss Joanna Mary Boyce (1831–1861), sister of G. P. Boyce, the painter (see note on p. 162). Two years later she married Mr. H. T. Wells, R.A. She continued to exhibit, but the high hopes which her talent inspired were cut off by early death. Several of her works were included in the Winter Exhibition in the Academy in 1901. She was a friend of Rossetti, who took a portrait of her as she lay in death (*Letters and Memoirs of D. G. Rossetti*, i. 212; *Life and Writings of Anne Gilchrist*, p. 94). Ruskin had a great regard for her, as is shown by the following passage from a letter to his father:—

> "Boulogne, *July* 19 [1861].—Mrs. Wells's death is nearly as great a trouble (*more* of a shock to me) than Mrs. Browning's—she was nearly a perfect creature in intellect and purpose, her work just beginning. You may remember her beautiful head of Elgiva in the Academy."

Elgiva, the queen of Edwy (from whom she is said to have been separated by the machinations of the Church), was in favour with painters at this time. Her sad story was the subject of a picture by Millais in 1847.]

Digitized by Google

in this head is so subtle, and so tenderly wrought, that at first the picture might easily be passed as hard or cold; but it could only so be passed, as Elgiva herself might have been sometimes seen,—by a stranger—without penetration of her sorrow. As we watch the face for a little time, the slight arch of the lip seems to begin to quiver, and the eyes fill with ineffable sadness and on-look of despair. The dignity of all the treatment—the beautiful imagination of faint but pure colour, place this picture, to my mind, among those of the very highest power and promise. Complete achievement there is not in it as yet, chiefly because the colours, quite exquisitely conceived and arranged, are not each in their own separate quality perfect, in the sense in which any given colour by Bonifazio or Giorgione is perfect; but if this artist, looking always to Nature and her own thoughts for the thing to be expressed, will strive to express them, with some memory of the great Venetians in her treatment of each separate hue, it seems to me that she might entertain the hope of taking place in the very first rank of painters.

Two pictures I passed intentionally without remark, not because they were unimportant, but because they seemed to me to unite good and bad qualities in a manner so curiously entangled, that no short criticism could clearly separate the one from the other—I mean Mr. Dobson's "Almsdeeds of Dorcas" (379),[1] and Mr. Sant's "Eda" (638).[2] Of these the first has certainly some high qualities, but seems to me singularly wanting in pictorial delightfulness: it looks like the work of a man of good feeling and considerable industry, who had been forced to learn to paint against his will, and did it in many respects well, but without pleasure. The second, "Eda," shows, as do all Mr. Sant's works, very high pictorial power, more or

[1] [W. C. T. Dobson (1817–1898), after exhibiting little figure subjects for some years at the Academy, was elected A.R.A. in 1860 and R.A. in 1872. He also contributed to the water-colour exhibitions.]

[2] [James Sant (*b.* 1820) was elected R.A. in 1870, and was principal Painter-in-Ordinary to Queen Victoria.]

Digitized by Google

less lost in the cold conventionality of modern colour, or non-colour. Surely Mr. Sant must admire Reynolds! why does he not aim at Reynolds's pitch and character of hue? Very certainly he admires children,—does he really think that this pretty little lady's cheeks have as much of the peach and as little of the mortal clay in them as he sees in the sunned cheek of living childhood? There is much throughout this picture to be admired, but also much to be regretted; and I cannot, without too long detention of the reader, accurately mark the gradations of respect or regret.

In the work commended to me by my friend—Mr. Davis's "Spring Evening" (514)—I am disappointed. It is unfair to judge of it in its present position, but it appears to me merely good Pre-Raphaelite work, certainly showing no evidence whatever of inventive power, and perhaps less tact than usual in choice of subject; but it is assuredly superior to any of the landscapes hung on the line.[1]

[1] [William Davis (1812–1873) was Professor of Painting in the Liverpool Academy. Rossetti was the "friend." The following letter, together with a stamped envelope addressed to the artist, was found among Rossetti's papers; presumably Ruskin had first sent it to Rossetti, who, thinking that its contents would prove discouraging rather than otherwise to Davis, obtained the writer's consent not to send it on: see *Ruskin, Rossetti, and Pre-Raphaelitism*, p. 169, from which book the letter is here reprinted. The pictures referred to in it are among those which Davis sent to "the Pre-Raphaelite Exhibition" of 1857:—

"My dear Sir,—I had much pleasure in examining the pictures of yours which Mr. Rossetti showed me this afternoon: they show an exquisite sense of colour, and much tender feeling of the expression of the scenes. Rossetti is himself so much delighted with them that I do not doubt their possessing qualities of peculiar interest to an artist, in the conquering of various technical difficulties. Your work, however, cannot become popular unless you choose subjects of greater interest: nor can I in the least direct you how to choose them—for there seems to me hardly a single point of communion or understanding between you and me as to the meaning of the word 'Subject.' It seems to *me* that you might have sought over most landscapes for miles together, and not stumbled over anything so *little* rewarding your pains and skill as that 'ditch and wheatfield.'

"Probably your modes of selection and habits of execution are now so determined that it would be mere impertinence in me to suggest others. I may however note one thing—namely, what seems to me your too great trust to the liquidity of the vehicle in blending your colours. Good use has been made of this quality by the masters of the Pre-Raphaelite school, but it is a dangerous temptation: the highest results

Digitized by Google

There are also many promising and meritorious studies of landscape, such as Mr. Dearmer's "Magpie Island" (665), scattered about the rooms, in positions variously inconspicuous; but these I do not particularly name, as until a picture possesses some qualities of *colour* it is not, in the proper sense, a picture at all; and studies of simple green effects are to be considered merely as materials for future work of higher order. Many of these studies, however, would have won some admiration and sympathy for the young artists, if they had been placed where they could have been in any wise justly seen; and in reprobation of the treatment they have for the most part received, it would be well to remember—glancing once more at Mr. Leighton's picture of Giotto and Cimabue—those noble lines of Mrs. Browning, in *Casa Guidi Windows*, beginning—

> "I hold, too,
> That Cimabue smiled upon the lad
> At the first stroke which passed what *he* could do;
> Or else his Virgin's smile had never had
> Such sweetness in't."[1]

And now, in conclusion, I have only to notice and answer an attempted defence by one of the daily papers of some of the pictures blamed in the above Notes. It is not indeed my usual practice to read, still less to answer, the remarks of journalists on what I write. Their public duty compels them to criticise at an hour's notice what I have taken years to consider; and it cannot be a matter

in oil-painting depend on judicious and powerful use of dryer, in no wise *floating* colour.

"I liked the two dogs the best of all I saw—the couchant winking one is delicious; and there is more sense of real *form* in this than in the other pictures.

"If you by chance should come to London this season, I think we might come to some understanding in a chat, if you would give me the pleasure of seeing you.

"Truly yours,
"J. Ruskin."]

[1] [For an earlier reference to the same "noble poem," see *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 243 *n.*); and compare *Political Economy of Art*, § 36 *n.*, § 78 *n.*, and *Val d'Arno*, § 99. See also below, p. 430.]

Digitized by Google

of wonder that, under such circumstances, they should often misunderstand, and sometimes misrepresent me. The error and the distortion may in general be left to the correction of time; but as these *Notes* are intended expressly for the use of readers who have little time to spare, I will meet with as much reply as may be necessary every endeavour on the part of the journalists to invalidate their authority. Hitherto I have noticed but one effort of the kind—namely, that in the *Globe* of the 18th of June.

It is above said [p. 28] of Mr. Roberts's picture, that the reasoning must be strange which persuaded its artist "that, because seen under the red light of sunset, the purple trunk of a stone pine, and the white stucco of house walls, the scarlet of tiles, and the green of foliage, might all be of the same colour."

The *Globe* replies:—That in *Modern Painters* I said,—"Local colour, changeful and uncertain in itself, is again disguised and modified by the hue of the light."[1] I did so. I said much more than this. If the writer had searched a little further, he might have found the following passage, infinitely more to his purpose: "I have seen the pale fresh green of spring vegetation in the gardens of Venice turned pure russet, or between that and crimson, by a vivid sunset of this kind, every *particle of green colour being absolutely annihilated.*" I said this, and said it most truly; but I never said that the leaves were, under such circumstances, *of the same colour as the trunks*, or as the palace tiles, or as the house walls. The light which will turn green to brownish russet turns blue to purple, white to pale rose, scarlet to a burning flame-colour, far above all possible imitation, and brown to scarlet,—every colour retaining its due relation, in paleness or darkness, to every other; while all the shadows, down to the minutest angle of a stone, retaining the local colours unaltered by the light, and

[1] [The reference is to vol. i. pt. ii. sec. i. ch. v. § 8 (in this edition, Vol. III. p. 161). The passage next referred to by Ruskin is vol. i. pt. ii. sec. ii. ch. i. § 18 (Vol. III. p. 271).]

Digitized by Google

doubly brought out by opposition, fill the intervals and interstices of the warm effect with the most marvellous pieces of the purest blue, green, or grey. A thousand different hues ought to have been seen in every inch of that glowing light, before it could have been right; and the notable misfortune of the picture is, that where there *is* the slightest variation, it is always on the wrong side. Thus, in the principal tower on the right, the tiles, which were naturally red, and ought now to have been of intensest vermilion, are actually, though a little darker, less *red* than the wall below; and the paler buildings (Castle of St. Angelo, etc.), beyond the river, are less affected by the red light than the sprays of the stone pine! while the reflection in the river—which the writer in the *Globe* instances as an introduction of a third colour—is the broadest fallacy in the whole work: it is brighter than the sky above it, instead of being, as a reflection always is, a little darker; and what makes the matter worse is that the river, seen from above in that position, could not have reflected the pale sky at the horizon at all, but only the dark sky some distance above.

I deeply regret having been forced to speak again of this picture, because (so much of private feeling it may be permitted me to confess) I have great personal regard for Mr. Roberts; but it may be well to state at once, that whenever I blame a painting, I do so as gently as is consistent with just explanation of its *principal* defects. I never say half of what I could say in its disfavour; and it will hereafter be found that when once I have felt it my duty to attack a picture, the worst policy which the friends of the artist can possibly adopt will be to defend it.

The next passage which the *Globe* endeavours to invalidate is that in which I said, respecting "The Rescue," —"The contrast between any dark colour and a light one is always nearly the same, however high we raise the light that falls on *both;*" against which the *Globe* quotes my

Digitized by Google

statement in *Modern Painters:*[1] — "Light and shade so completely conquer the distinctions of local colour, that the difference of hue between the illumined parts of a white and black object is not so great as the difference, in sunshine, between the illumined and dark side of either separately."

Will the writer for the *Globe* be so good as to point out the contradiction? This last passage, indeed, says:— "Light and *shade* conquer distinctions of local colour." It does not say that *light* alone does. In the first passage I say: "Raise white a certain height, and raise black as far, and still they are at the same distance from each other; or, in other terms, raise 6 to 12 and 0 to 6, and they are still 6 apart." In the second passage I say: "That this difference, whatever it may at any moment be, is not so great as the difference between the full light and full shadow of a given colour in sunshine."

Of course this does not mean dim sunshine, or that dark sides may not by reflected light become nearly as bright as light sides; but it expresses, in few words, this most important and stern fact, that, while the resources of art always easily equal the most violent distinctions of local colours or patterns, they are utterly inadequate to express the depths of gradation between full sunshine and full shadow in any given colour—so that Albert Dürer, and all the great masters of form, are compelled to leave all local colour as pure *white*, in order to get the gradations between it and the shadow. In Albert Dürer's best plate, the "Adam and Eve"[2]—highly finished as it is—the green leaves are represented as pure white, in order to get them even approximately raised above the shadow; and even then half of the intermediate gradations are missed.

The great colourists always chose, of course, to give the other side of the scale of truth. They gave the local colours truly, and sank or subdued the gradations of shadow

[1] [Vol. i. pt. ii. sec. i. ch. v. § 8 (in this edition, Vol. III. p. 162).]
[2] [For a note of other references to this plate, see Vol. V. p. 159.]

Digitized by Google

—Veronese giving the type of the perfect statement of local colour, Tintoret striking the exact balance between him and the Chiaroscurists, and Rembrandt representing as much as was possible of the truth of the opposite scale.[1]

Millais is a great colourist, and, of course, works on the principles of the colourists. The question respecting his picture is one respecting the distinctions of local colour, and that question I have simply and sufficiently answered; nor would any one have been embarrassed by the answer who had ever seen a coal fire, unless the unfortunate writer for the *Globe* had done his best to communicate to them the infection of his misunderstanding. The press does good service in many things, but it is a wonderful instrument for the dissemination of imbecility; and there is this mischief in the nature of things, very prettily illustrated by the subject we are upon of local colour, that dulness, like local blackness, "is always black, however high you raise the light that falls upon it"; but as all whiteness may entirely cease to be white in the night, so there is no perspicuity which a resolute bluntness cannot obscure.

Thus much of answer may suffice touching what the writer for the *Globe* ventures to assert on his own responsibility; but his mention of Mr. Leslie[2] obliges me to say a few words respecting this artist, which I had intended to reserve for another place and another time.[3]

There has perhaps never been a greater master than Leslie of the phases of such delicate expression on the

[1] [In the fourth volume of *Modern Painters*, published in the year following the date of these *Notes*, Ruskin returned to this subject and elaborated it. See ch. iii., "Of Turnerian Light" (Vol. VI. p. 48).]

[2] [The article in the *Globe* was a review conjointly of Ruskin's *Academy Notes* for 1855 and C. R. Leslie's *Handbook for Young Painters*. Leslie's experience as a painter was referred to as investing his critical dicta with great authority, and the reviewer quoted Leslie's criticisms of *Modern Painters* as disposing of Ruskin's claims.]

[3] [Charles Robert Leslie (1794–1859), A.R.A. 1821, R.A. 1826. From 1848 to 1851 he was Professor of Painting at the Academy. Ruskin returned to praise Leslie's skill in subsequent issues of the *Notes* (see below, pp. 105, 222, 223). Ruskin was on friendly terms with Leslie and his family: see *Dilecta*, in the preface to which book Ruskin says: "The too brief notes of autobiography left by the quietly skilful and modest painter, C. R. Leslie, contain the truest and best-written sketches of the leading men of his time that, so far as I know, exist in domestic literature." Two pictures by Leslie, and several sketches for pictures, are in the Tate Gallery.]

Digitized by Google

human face as may be excited by the slight passions and humours of the drawing-room or boudoir. His painting from the *Rape of the Lock*, in last year's Academy, was to my mind an absolute masterpiece,* and perhaps the most covetable picture of its kind which I ever remember seeing by an English artist. Equal to Hogarth in several of its passages of expression, it was raised in some respects above him by the exquisite grace and loveliness of the half-seen face of its heroine, and by the playful yet perfect dignity of its hero. Nor was it less admirable as a reading of Pope; for every subordinate character had been studied with such watchful reverence to every word in which it is alluded to throughout the poem, that it seemed to me as if the spirit of the poet had risen beside the painter as he worked, and guided every touch of the pencil.

This, and much more than this, I wrote of the picture at the time it appeared, and sent my notice of it to the *Times*, together with one of Hunt and Inchbold. The letter was not inserted; and as the only part of it which I was very desirous to put before the public was that respecting Hunt, and I supposed the letter was too long for the *Times* in the form in which it was first sent, I withdrew the notices of Leslie and Inchbold, and sent it again in this reduced form. It was then inserted;[1] but it has always been a matter of serious regret to me that I had not the opportunity of directing the attention of the public specifically to this picture while it was on the Academy walls; and the more so, because it must very soon become my painful task to expose the weakness of the Author, when I would willingly

* His picture from *Don Quixote*, this year, is less important, but full of admirable power.[2]

[1] [The *Times*, May 5, 1854. The picture by Hunt was "The Light of the World." Inchbold had no picture in the Academy of 1854; in 1853 he had one, "The Chapel, Bolton." On May 25 appeared a further letter from Ruskin, noticing the same painter's "The Awakening Conscience." The letters are given in Vol. XII. pp. 328-335. The unprinted portion of the former has not been found among Ruskin's MSS.]

[2] [The picture of 1855 was No. 95, "Sancho Panza and Dr. Pedro Rezio." The picture of 1854 was No. 192, "Sir Plume demands the restoration of the Lock."]

Digitized by Google

have confined myself to praise of the Painter.[1] The power over slight and passing expression is always a separate gift, eminently possessed by many caricaturists (for instance, in the highest degree by Leech[2]); and it has never, I believe, in a single instance, been consistent with any understanding of the qualities of the highest art. It was, therefore, the extreme of rashness in Mr. Leslie to attempt a work of criticism on historical or sacred painting. But it was worse than rashness—it was an inexcusable want of sense, to venture, farther, into the criticism of landscape art; and his work, instead of becoming what it was intended to be by the ingenious Mr. Murray, a guide to young painters, will remain a perpetual warning to painters advanced in life, not to suppose that by watching the smiles of coquettes they can learn to appreciate the ideals of the masters of religious art, or, by a life spent among the sophistications of the world, become sharers in the spirit of the great painters who have communed with the heart of Nature.

[1] [In 1855 Leslie published his Academy lectures under the title *A Handbook for Young Painters*. Among other statements, Leslie found fault with the work of Francia as insipid. He made also several direct criticisms upon Ruskin's *Modern Painters* (*e.g.*, pp. 245, 268–278). Ruskin's retort, in the passage above, was supplemented in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. App. i. (where allusion is made to "Mr. Leslie's unadvised and unfortunate *réchauffé* of the fallacious art-maxims of the last century"); and in vol. iv. App. i., where, with reference to Leslie's criticism of Francia, Ruskin says: "Even those whose work is of higher aim, and wrought habitually in colour, are prevented by their pursuit of *piquant* expression from understanding noble expression." See also below, p. 220.]

[2] [See below, pp. 332–334.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

II

NOTES

ON SOME OF

THE PRINCIPAL PICTURES

EXHIBITED IN THE ROOMS OF THE

ROYAL ACADEMY,

AND THE

SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS

No. II.—1856

By JOHN RUSKIN, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS," "STONES OF VENICE," "SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE," ETC., ETC.

WITH POSTSCRIPT

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 65, CORNHILL.
1856.

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of the second number of *Academy Notes* there were six editions :—

First Edition (1856).—The title-page was as on the preceding page, except that the words "With Postscript" were omitted. An octavo pamphlet (stabbed and without wrappers) of 48 pp. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. 1–2; title-page (with an advertisement of the *Notes* of 1855, 3rd edition, on the reverse), pp. 3–4; preface (here pp. 43–46), pp. 5–10; text of the notes, pp. 11–48. Imprint at the foot of the last page—"London: Printed by Smith, Elder and Co., 15, Old Bailey." No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. Issued on May 9; price Sixpence.

Second Edition (1856).—Except for the words "Second Edition" on the title-page, this was an exact reprint of the first. Four numbered pages of advertisements of "Mr. Ruskin's Works on Art" were added at the end.

Third Edition (1856).—To this edition, a postscript (here pp. 85–87) of three pages was added, and the imprint was removed to the reverse of p. 51. On the title-page "Third Edition. | With Postscript." Otherwise a reprint of the former editions. In addition to the four pages of advertisements, a Catalogue (of 16 numbered pages) of books published by Smith, Elder and Co. was bound up at the end.

Fourth Edition (1856).—An exact reprint of the Third, with the number of the edition altered on the title-page. Smith, Elder & Co.'s Catalogue was reduced from 16 to 8 pages.

Fifth Edition (1856).—An exact reprint of Fourth, with the number of the edition altered on the title-page.

Sixth Edition (1856).—The number altered on the title-page; the Postscript was less leaded and concluded on p. 50, at the foot of which page is the imprint. The Catalogue consists of 14 pages. Otherwise an exact reprint of the previous editions.

Reprinted in 1902 in *Ruskin on Pictures*, vol. ii. pp. 35–74.

Reviews appeared in the *Economist*, May 24, 1856; the *Leader*, May 17; the *Art Journal*, June 1856, N.S., vol. 2, p. 196; the *Guardian*, July 16 (of *Modern Painters*, vol. iv., also).

In the *National Review* (edited by R. H. Hutton and W. Bagehot), July 1856, vol. 3, pp. 80–106, there was a sympathetic appreciation of Ruskin's work generally, headed "Pictures and Picture Criticism," and reviewing among other works *Academy Notes* for 1855 and 1856.]

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

In presenting the second number of these *Notes* to the public, distinguished as they are from most of the criticism brought under their notice, by the writer's attaching his name to them, I may perhaps be permitted one or two words respecting the probable difference, in aim, between anonymous and acknowledged criticism; and this the rather, that I found, last year, the offence which the work, in its very nature, could not but give, seemed to be deepened instead of diminished by the fact of its being openly owned to, and I was bitterly accused of malice or unkindness, as if malice were usually the most outspoken passion in the world, and unkindness always the greater when it was ready to answer for itself.

It is evident that there can be but three reasons for a writer's concealment of his personality. Either, firstly, having confidence in what he has written, he must have none in his name (as I wrote the first volume of *Modern Painters*, sure of the truth of what I wrote, but fearing that I might not obtain fair hearing if the reader knew my youth[1]). Or, secondly, he may know that his name would carry some weight with it, but may be ashamed of what he has written. Or, thirdly, there may be dangers of private loss or inconvenience, which he cannot speak openly without incurring, and which to avoid he must get his opinion uttered as best he may, namelessly. Generally, I believe, the last reason to be the only legitimate one; and that, though in rare instances it may be wisdom to try to obtain a hearing under a masque, which would be refused if the

[1] [Ruskin was twenty-four when the first volume of *Modern Painters* was published. For a reference to its anonymous publication, see *Præterita*, i. ch. xii. § 250.]

Digitized by Google

face were shown, in all ordinary cases it should be not only with the voice, but with the eyes, that men should address their fellows. I never felt at ease in my "graduate" incognito; and although I consented, some nine years ago, to review Lord Lindsay's *Christian Art*, and Sir Charles Eastlake's *Essay on Oil Painting*, in the *Quarterly*, I have ever since steadily refused to write even for that once respectable periodical.*

But, as touching these *Notes*, of which I hope to continue the series yearly, I trust that the reader will feel that I have given him the best guarantee in my power of their sincere purpose, in signing them. If he thinks I always see the brightest colours in the works of my friends, or that it can only be in rooted malice that I point out an error in perspective, I have put it in his power to inquire into these matters, and to ascertain for himself whether indeed it is always a friend's work that I praise, or whether the transgressor of perspective law is conscious of any personal enmity between himself and me. And truly, it is

* It has lately, I observe, in consequence, sought to amuse its readers by some account of my private affairs; of which—if the writer of the article in question is not ashamed of *his* name—I shall be happy to furnish him with more accurate details, as well as to recommend him to a school where he may learn what will not in future be disadvantageous to his writings—a little more astronomy and optics.[1]

[1] [Ruskin's reviews of Lindsay and Eastlake appeared in the numbers for June 1847 and March 1848. They are reprinted in Vol. XII. (pp. 169–302), where (pp. xxxix.–xli.) Ruskin's reasons for writing the reviews, and Lockhart's editorial treatment of them are dealt with. The *Quarterly* for March 1856 contained a review of *Modern Painters*, vols. i., ii., iii., and of the first number of *Academy Notes*. The reviewer began (and ended) with "an analysis of the author himself." He was accused of an entire absence of moral qualities, of "a cold and hardened habit"; "an unfeeling heart"; and of "malice, bitterness, and uncharitableness." It was asked, "How does it happen that this man never descends from his mountains—'the pure and holy hills,' as he calls them—without stumbling on that particular kind 'of young lady who, rising in the middle of the day, jaded by her last night's ball,'" etc., etc. Ruskin was also attacked for having renounced his trusteeship under Turner's will (see Introduction to Vol. XIII. p. xxx.), and was accused of "endeavouring to have the expenses of his lawyer's investigation defrayed from Turner's estate." With regard to "optics" and "astronomy," the reviewer devoted a good deal of space to controverting Ruskin's criticisms upon the representations of light and sun in the old masters. The author of the *Quarterly* article was Lady Eastlake (Elizabeth Rigby), wife of the P.R.A., whose pictures had been criticised in the *Notes* (see above, p. 13). (See *Letters and Journals of Lady Eastlake*, ii. 82).]

Digitized by Google

a sorrowful thing to me, and one bearing witness, very bitterly, to the dishonesty of criticism in general, that people should be so ready to call every kind of fault-finding "hostility," the moment they can bring it home to a known person. One would think, to hear them, that there was no right or wrong in art; that every opinion which men formed of it was dictated by prejudice, and expressed in passion; that all praise was treacherous—all rebuke malignant—and silence itself merely a pause of hesitation between Flattery and Slander.

That it must sometimes be so, I am forced to believe, since the imputation of such dishonesty is constant; and it is strange, as well as frightful, to reflect how many forms of guilt are involved in one dishonest criticism. A common thief steals only property; a dishonest critic steals property, together with Fame, and the power of being useful. A common thief steals, for the most part, in imperfect knowledge of right; but a dishonest critic steals wittingly, and with all advantages of education. A common thief steals "to satisfy his soul when he is hungry";[1] but a dishonest critic, to satisfy his soul when he is envious. A common liar risks the discovery, and bears the penalty, of his own falsehood; but a lying critic shrinks behind his associates, and diffuses the discredit of his falsehood, while he multiplies its influence. A common liar, being discovered, leaves other men's honour unscathed; a lying critic, discovered, has infected with his own disgrace the men behind whom he stooped, and cast suspicion over the general honour of his race.

This, and much more than this, is the real character of all anonymous writers against conscience; and the evil of it would be too great to be, with a remnant of charity, imputed to any human being, were it not that men continually commit their most blamable acts in the mere dulness of habit, and are like dogs taught to pilfer, in whom

[1] [Proverbs vi. 30.]

Digitized by Google

we pardon, to the imperfect nature, what would be unpardonable in a rational one.

It is little to say that I am free from guilt such as this. I have striven, from the first day when I began to write, to reach an impartiality far beyond that of mere uprightness. It is possible to be thoroughly upright, and yet unconsciously partial—continually deceived by personal associations or instincts. I have striven for that higher impartiality, which can only be obtained by labour in conquering predilections, by toil in the successive study of opponent schools, and earnest endeavour to sympathize with the separate spirit of each master I approached. And I can say fearlessly, that although it is not possible, in the time I am able to give to this work, to enter as I should desire into the consideration of every picture examined, yet I approach each of them with a distinct effort to gain the point of aspect by which its painter intended it to be commanded, and with a personal experience of the difficulties of various art, which renders me as charitable to true effort as disdainful of attempts to be great without labour. I say this, once for all, and the reader will perhaps pardon me this length of preface, since it is to assure him that I do not write these *Notes* carelessly, nor look upon them as things of little importance. I look upon them, on the contrary, as one of the chief works which I have henceforward to do; and though, from its very nature, it must always be done hastily, it never will be done thoughtlessly, nor without the earnest hope that the pain I may have to give by unwilling blame, may be more than counterbalanced by the help which I know even the best painters may derive from the expression of an eager sympathy, and a faithful praise.

Digitized by Google

EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY

If the reader, before fixing his attention on any particular work, will glance generally round any of the rooms, he will be struck by a singular change in the character of the entire exhibition. He will find that he can no longer distinguish the Pre-Raphaelite works as a separate class, but that between them and the comparatively few pictures remaining quite of the old school, there is a perfectly unbroken gradation, formed by the works of painters in various stages of progress, struggling forward out of their conventionalism to the Pre-Raphaelite standard. The meaning of this is simply that the battle is completely and confessedly won by the latter party; that animosity has changed into emulation, astonishment into sympathy, and that a true and consistent school of art is at last established in the Royal Academy of England.

Such an exhibition I have never yet seen, and the excellence of it is all the more to be rejoiced in because it is every whit progressive. It does not consist merely in the splendour of the work of one noble artist, urged to unusual exertion (though this it can boast), nor in an accidental assemblage of the happiest efforts of several (though by this also it is adorned); but in the achievement which has rewarded the steady effort of all, now at last turned in the right direction, and ensuring for each, in process of time, such utmost success as his genius is capable of. There is hardly an exhibitor this year who has not surpassed himself, and who will not surpass himself again in every subsequent effort; and I know that they must feel this, and

Digitized by Google

must be as happy in their sense of sudden power, and in the perception of the new world opened to their sincerity, as we spectators have cause to be in the gifts of art they offer us.

As for my own special work, I look upon it as now almost supererogatory—I have little to do but to multiply monotonous terms of praise; for, now that nearly every picture in the room has a meaning, and the observer is thus led to expect one, and to exert his attention, I believe that people will easily distinguish such meanings for themselves, without the impertinence of explanation; and as for minor fault-finding, I hold it generally useless in the cases of artists who mean well, and are painting from Nature. They will gradually find out their faults for themselves, and the spectator ought seldom to have his attention withdrawn from the real merits by any carping at passages of failure. Last year several pictures, in which to point to anything was to point to an error, were put into the best places, when it was right at once to mark their demerit, in order to check this system of complimentary precedence. But this year the worst pictures are, for the most part, in retired places, and there I shall have pleasure in leaving them. If I find fault with any others, it is either to help the observer in forming his judgment of art in general, or to suggest a possibly better mode of practice to the painter.

10. Christmas Day, in St. Peter's, at Rome, 1854. (*D. Roberts, R.A.*)

The change above spoken of is very manifest in this, the first picture of importance enough to attract the eye. It is both careful and brilliant; and though I do not myself like the subject (caring neither for the architecture nor the pomp of St. Peter's),[1] I can answer for the faithful delineation of what must be to most people a striking scene.

[1] [See Vol. I. p. 380; Vol. IV. p. 105; and *Præterita*, ii. ch. ii. § 32.]

Digitized by Google

The effect of light and shade in this picture was very difficult, and is studiously wrought—note, for instance, the pretty and true change in the colour of the red cross in the dome, where it is half in shade and half in sun.

8. The Roadside Spring, Yorkshire. (*E. C. Booth.*)

From the pomp of marble and strength of multitude, let us turn back to this quiet nook beside the wild Yorkshire road, and consider a little whether the truer grandeur is in those lifted aisles or in this fragment of grey wall, overwaved by its few ears of corn, and ringing to the low voice of its lonely brooklet. The picture is not a first-rate one—it is not even a very special example of the advancing school; but the mind of the painter has been in happy tone when he chose his subject, and if you examine it, kneeling (there is no other way), as perhaps you would those flowers and grass by the roadside itself, I think you will have pleasure in watching the delicate tracery of the bush leaves, and the stoop of the poppy over the wall, and the soft moss and grass in its crannies, and the clear water, just making the road a little browner where it spreads over it. I cannot answer for the feelings of others, but I think there is more benediction to be had here than out of the magnificence of St. Peter's.

17. "Love's Labour Lost." (*F. R. Pickersgill, A.*[1])

This picture presents the same elements of advance in a yet more curious and striking way. Mr. Pickersgill is already a Pre-Raphaelite in purpose, and only fails—as when artists first begin to work thoroughly from Nature they always fail—by painting the easiest things too definitely better than the rest. I do not mean that they ought to paint the easy things worse, but only that a discordance is

[1] [Frederick Richard Pickersgill (1820–1890) began to exhibit at the Academy in 1839. In 1847 he was elected A.R.A., and in 1857 R.A. He was Keeper from 1873 to 1887. For an earlier reference to him, see the "Addenda" (being Notes on the Academy in 1848) to *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 339.]

Digitized by Google

always felt in this stage of their study between the good accessory parts and failing principal ones. It is to be mended by conquering the difficult, not by surrendering the easy. If we examine the jewellery of the lady dressed in blue, in the centre, or the golden brocade of the one on the left, we shall find them very nearly right; the grass is also coming fast right; but Mr. Pickersgill cannot yet paint a face. A little more hard work, taking his models just as they come, without any fear or flattery, and he will win his spurs.

35. HOME. (*J. N. Paton.*[1])

A most pathetic and precious picture, easily understood, and entirely right as far as feeling is concerned. Mr. Paton must have had more pleasure in painting this picture than in those fairy assemblies of his; and though the cottage details here are not so attractive as those nightshade and woodbine convolutions of leaf scenery, they are in reality better painted, and serve to better use. Mr. Paton has, however, a good deal yet to learn in colour. He should for this spring paint nothing but opening flowers, and, in the autumn, nothing but apricots and peaches.[2]

39. THE STREAM FROM LLYN IDWAL, CARNARVONSHIRE. (*A. W. Hunt.*[3])

The best landscape I have seen in the exhibition for many a day—uniting most subtle finish and watchfulness of

[1] [Sir Joseph Noel Paton (1821–1902), appointed Her Majesty's Limner for Scotland in 1866. The pictures by which he first made his mark were of fairy-land—such as "The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania," "The Reconciliation of Oberon and Titania," and "The Fairy Queen." He had made the acquaintance of Millais as a student at the Academy in 1843; and afterwards he was in sympathy with the Pre-Raphaelite group. The picture noticed above represented a soldier, mortally wounded, who has just reached home, and sinks down on a chair, tended by his mother and sweetheart. For Ruskin's acquaintance with Paton, see Vol. XII. p. xxvii. To the painter's "fairy assemblies" Ruskin again referred in *The Art of England*, ch. iv.]

[2] [Compare p. 156, below.]

[3] [Alfred William Hunt (1830–1896) was at this time twenty-six years of age, and was still hesitating between a scholastic and an artistic career. It is said that the hanging of this picture on the line at the Academy and Ruskin's favourable notice of it turned the scale. He and Ruskin became friends (see p. 298), and he was god-father to one of the artist's daughters. Some reminiscences of Ruskin by

Digitized by Google

Nature, with real and rare power of composition. The mass of mountain in the centre is grandly arranged, so as best to set off the action of its contour, and contrasted with the diagonal cleavages of rock on the left: note how they run from the foreground up to the crest of the hill. The *rents* of cloud, and fading or forming of the hill shadows through them, are magnificently expressed. It only wants a little more subtlety in the finish of the gradations: portions of those clouds ought to be stippled so delicately that the eye could not trace the outmost touches—this would also give them more depth and unity. Seen a little way off, the work is spotty, at present, and wants bringing together; the worst part being the dappled blue sky on the left, in which the blue is not pure, nor the clouds soft, nor well set. The sheep in the foreground look too small—not but that real sheep in a Welsh foreground often do; but it is the painter's business to avoid this, and make everything look of its real size.

58. CINDERELLA, AFTER HER SISTERS HAVE LEFT FOR THE BALL. (*Miss E. Turck.*)

Very pretty, and well studied; but Cinderella does not look like the lady of a fairy tale. I am rather puzzled myself to know how her relationship to her remarkable godmother could best be indicated, so as to leave her still a quite *real* little lady in a real kitchen. But I am glad to see this sternly realistic treatment, at all events.

59. THE WHITE OWL. (*W. J. Webbe.*)

A careful study—the brown wing excellent. The softness of an owl's feathers is perhaps inimitable; but I think the breast might have come nearer the mark.

another daughter (Miss Violet Hunt) were contributed to the *Westminster Gazette* of Feb. 3, 1900. Hunt continued from time to time to paint in oils, but water-colour was his favourite medium. He was elected an associate of the Old Water-Colour Society in 1862, and a full member in 1864. For a notice of a drawing of his exhibited in 1871, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 129 *n*. There is a fine water-colour by him in the Tate Gallery (No. 1703). An exhibition of his drawings was held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1897 (Memoir in the Catalogue by Cosmo Monkhouse).]

Digitized by Google

68. Little Red Riding-Hood. (*R. Redgrave, R.A.*)

Mr. Redgrave has, as far as I know, never painted so good a landscape. The ferns in the centre are beautiful; and there is evidence of painstaking and of good feeling everywhere.

75. The Last Parting of Marie Antoinette and her Son. (*E. M. Ward, R.A.*[1])

I fear this picture must be excepted from the progressive list, and marked as one of the representations of the old school; but it is not a bad one.

94. The Abandoned. (*C. Stanfield, R.A.*)

Perhaps this also is rather a fortunate example of the artist's work than a new phase of it. But I never saw a Stanfield I liked so well: the sea is superb—quite Turnerian in the mystery of the farther waves—and the sentiment of the picture very grand; and that not by means of twilight, or sunset, or moonlight, or any strangeness of arrangement or elaboration of idea, but by simple fact of deserted ship and desert sea.[2]

101. The Greetings in the Desert, Egypt—"Selamat" Teiyibeen. (*J. F. Lewis.*)

The superposition of this picture to "West Australian"[3] is the first glaring piece of bad hanging I note in the Academy this year. Mr. Cooper's picture, whatever its merits may be, is executed so as to have been seen quite as well in the upper place; while Mr. Lewis's cannot be seen in the least but on the line. It would take no trouble,

[1] [Edward Matthew Ward (1816–1879) was elected R.A. in the preceding year. Several of his historical pictures are in the Tate Gallery.]

[2] [For another reference to this picture, see *The Harbours of England*, § 19 n., Vol. XIII. p. 29.]

[3] [A picture of a horse so named, No. 100, by A. Cooper, R.A., for whom see p. 219.]

Digitized by Google

any afternoon when the Academy closes, to change the places; and I am sure that Mr. Cooper would, in enforcing such an arrangement, be felt to have paid a just tribute to the talents of a great brother-artist, and to have done himself little injury and much honour.

Of the style of Mr. Lewis's picture I need only say that it is like that of his work in general, and refer the reader to the note on the example of it in the rooms of the Water-Colour Society (p. 73). There is, however, a very curious and skilful circumstance in the composition here: the neck of the camel was too serpentine, and stopped too abruptly after suggesting this undulation of line. The white cloud beyond at once varies, and continues, this serpentine tendency, leading it away towards the upper edge of the picture, while the straight flakes of cloud, descending obliquely to the right, oppose the two upright peaks of the saddle.

I may as well refer at once to Mr. Lewis's other work, 336[1] (the Academy is rich in possessing two). How two such pictures have been executed, together with the drawing for the Water-Colour Society, all within the year, is to me wholly inconceivable; there seems a year's work in 336 alone. Yet it is not a favourable example of the master—the toil being too palpable and equal on the stones in the reflected light; where also there is neither colour nor form of interest enough to justify it. The draperies and trellis-work are faultlessly marvellous.

131. "Many Happy Returns of the Day." (*W. P. Frith, R.A.*)

A taking picture, much, it seems to me, above Mr. Frith's former standard. Note the advancing Pre-Raphaelitism in the wreath of leaves round the child's head.[2] One

[1] ["Street Scene in Cairo, near the Babel Luk."]

[2] [Mr. Frith does not seem to have been duly grateful for Ruskin's qualified praise. "Ruskin's works," he writes, "bristle with errors; one of his notable ones was his saying, on the discovery of a bit of what he took for Pre-Raphaelite work in one of the worst pictures I ever painted, that I was 'at last in the right way,' or words to that effect."—*My Autobiography*, vol. iii. p. 5.]

Digitized by Google

is only sorry to see any fair little child having too many and too kind friends, and in so great danger of being toasted, toyed, and wreathed into selfishness and misery.

138. Mr. David Cox. (*Sir J. W. Gordon, R.A.*[1])

A very noble portrait, and, in the unassuming but powerful features, thoroughly characteristic. I am heartily glad to see this work of honour to a good painter so well accomplished.

145. Geraniums. (*Miss Mutrie.*[2])

146. Roses. (*Miss A. F. Mutrie.*)

I cannot say more of the work of the two Misses Mutrie than I have said already. It is nearly as good as simple flower-painting can be; the only bettering it is capable of would be by more able composition, or by the selection, for its subject, of flowers growing naturally. Why not a roadside bank of violets? 335 and 342 are the best examples, by these artists, in this exhibition.[3]

147. Saved! (*Sir E. Landseer, R.A.*[4])

I wish this picture had not been put so high, for the bolder Landseer is in handling, the more interesting his work becomes, under close observance: nor does his peculiar system of clay-colouring gain at all in effect by distance. I never saw a child fall into water, nor a dog bring one out; but under such circumstances are not its clothes usually wet? and do not wet clothes cling to the limbs?

[1] [Sir John Watson Gordon (1790–1864) became the chief portrait-painter in Scotland on the death of Raeburn in 1823. He was knighted in 1850, on becoming President of the Royal Scottish Academy, and in the same year he was elected R.A. His portrait of David Cox is now in the Birmingham and Midland Institute.]

[2] [Miss Martha Darley Mutrie (1824–1885) studied at the Manchester School of Design, then under George Wallis, and first exhibited at the Academy in 1853. She was elder sister of Miss A. F. Mutrie. (See above, p. 7.) There are examples of the work of both sisters in the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

[3] [335. "Orchids," by Miss A. F. Mutrie. 342. "Primulas," by Miss Mutrie.]

[4] [For a summary of Ruskin's references to Landseer, see Vol. IV. p. 334 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

155. HER MAJESTY THE EMPRESS EUGENIE.[1] (*E. Boutibonne.*)

This would have been a really admirable portrait but for its foggy and slovenly distance. Complete that, and the work would look almost like life.

160. THE LETTER. (*E. Delfosse.*)

A fair example of a peculiar, and very clever, though perhaps I should hardly call it meritorious, style, lately much adopted by French artists. It is a mannerism of softness, and subduing of all very bright colours—more or less successful in result, of course, according to the painter's general powers; but yet seeming to be taught in schools of art so extensive and so popular as to assimilate a large number of painters not only in style, but in aim, and prevent their emerging from a charmed circle of subjects—consisting usually of pretty women, sprightly in expression, but rather blunt in chiselling of features, wearing prettily brocaded dresses, and doing nothing, prettily. These works seem to be gradually constituting a species of manufacture, which supplies the French drawing-rooms with pictures, as Sèvres does with china. Nevertheless, one very original painter belongs to this school, of whom more presently.*

162. THE GRACES. (*W. E. Frost, A.*[2])

I believe Mr. Frost might be a painter if he chose; but he will not become one by multiplying studies of this kind, looking like Etty's with all the colour scraped off. Everybody knows well enough, by this time, that Graces always stand on one leg, and bend the other, and never have anything to fasten their dresses with at the waists. Cannot Mr. Frost tell us something new?

* See Notes on French Exhibition at the close of the pamphlet, p. 83.

[1] [This picture was the property of Queen Victoria, and hangs in the Lower Corridor at St. James's Palace. The same artist painted four companion portraits (which are also at St. James's Palace) of the Queen and Prince Albert, and the Emperor Napoleon and Empress Eugenie, all on horseback (the horses by Herring).]

[2] [William Edward Frost (1810–1877) had been introduced to Etty at an early age, and followed that master's style. He was elected A.R.A. in 1846, and R.A. in 1871. His principal works were all of mythological subjects.]

Digitized by Google

175. THE EMPEROR CHARLES V. AT YUSTE. (*A. Elmore, A.*[1])

One of the works still belonging wholly to the old school. There is a good deal of fair painting in it, but an extraordinary missing of the main mark throughout. See the second paragraph of the long quotation in the catalogue:—

"Again the afternoon sun was shining over the great walnut-tree, full into the gallery. From this pleasant spot, filled with the fragrance of the garden and the murmur of the fountain, and bright with glimpses of the golden Vera, they carried him to the gloomy chamber of his sleepless nights, and laid him on the bed from which he was to rise no more." [From Stirling-Maxwell's *Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V.*[2]]

Naturally we expect the painter to take some pains (as he has given this quotation) in the expression of verdure, fragrance, and sunshine. But the walnut-tree is grey, not green; the air, judging by the look of it, cannot be perfumed by anything but paint; and there is no sunshine anywhere, while the whitish light, which is given for it, shines not over the tree into the gallery, but from the back of the spectator. The exhibited pictures, by Titian (!), are greyer than all the rest. Charles must have bought them from an exceedingly dishonest dealer.

200. PEACE CONCLUDED, 1856.[3] (*J. E. Millais, A.*)

I thought, some time ago, that this painter was likely to be headed by others of the school; but Titian himself could hardly head him now. This picture is as brilliant in invention as consummate in executive power; both this and "Autumn Leaves," 448, will rank in future among the world's best masterpieces; and I see no limit to what the painter

[1] [Alfred Elmore (1815–1881) was elected R.A. in the year following this exhibition. He continued to paint historical pictures.]

[2] [The passage is at p. 340 of the edition of 1891.]

[3] [For this picture (popularly known as "The Return from the Crimea") Colonel Malcolm sat for the wounded officer, and Lady Millais for the wife. It is now in the possession of Mr. T. H. Miller, of Preston.]

Digitized by Google

may hope in future to achieve. I am not sure whether he may not be destined to surpass all that has yet been done in figure-painting, as Turner did all past landscape.*

221. THE BREAKWATER AT PLYMOUTH. (*F. R. Lee, R.A.*[1])

It is long since Mr. Lee painted such a picture as this; nor, as far as I recollect, has any one else yet so faithfully rendered the sweep of large waves over level wall. The sense of space is very great throughout, and there is really fine feeling and treatment in the dying away of the successive spray-clouds at the end of the long path of stone. There are several studies of sea by Mr. Lee this year which seem to me to mark quite a new energy in his mind: all of them are earnest, and entirely separated from the usual types of conventional gale and wave. This is the best, but 318 ["Breaking up a Wreck"] is another good example. Its rock foreground is evidently painted from Nature, and is very fine in form; though there are awkward flaws here and there, the consequence seemingly of prolonged habits, hardly broken off, of working without reference to fact. For instance, in the calm pool of water on the left, the stones on the left side have reflections, but those on the right side none.

230. MASTER ISAAC NEWTON IN HIS GARDEN AT WOOLSTHORPE IN THE AUTUMN OF 1665. (*R. Hannah.*)

One of the somewhat incipient pictures of the rising school, but of considerable merit. The Nemesis of Pre-Raphaelitism is its way of fixing on precisely the ugliest

* Note the hint for bringing more of Nature into our common work, in the admirable modelling of the polar bear and lion, though merely children's toys.

[1] [Frederick Richard Lee (1799–1879) is characterized at some length by Ruskin in the preface to the second edition of vol. i. of *Modern Painters*. A writer in *Blackwood*, whose critical capacity was challenged by Ruskin, had written of Lee that he "often reminds us of Gainsborough's best manner; but he is superior to him always in subject, composition, and variety." Ruskin demolishes this comparison, but speaks of Lee's works as "well-intentioned, simple, free from affectation or imitation, and evidently painted with constant reference to Nature." See Vol. III. p. 18.]

Digitized by Google

things it can find to paint. I don't believe there is such another uninteresting tree-trunk within a circle of ten miles round London, as the one in the centre of this, Sir Isaac's garden. The execution is also hard, though careful: one of the most successful bits is the head of Diamond; not content with "amusing himself with a book," but having also half a mind to the apple, and proposing speedily to interfere with, if not prevent altogether, the discovery of the solar system.[1]

262. THE VILLAGE POSTMAN. (*J. M. Carrick.*[2])

If the reader glances along the various pictures hung near the floor, in any of the rooms, he will find that nearly every other one consists of an attentive study; there is, indeed, so much care taken with so many minor works that it becomes impossible to distinguish all as they deserve, and I may, perhaps, have missed some that contain more than study —real achievement. But I can only name this one, as a leading specimen, out of a large number not by any means perfect, but presenting many interesting natural scenes and thoughts, and highly conscientious in execution. There has been immense labour in this picture, and it is very genuine throughout: the old stone-slated roof and ivy are first-rate, and the figures of the child and its grandfather coming out slowly to see if there is indeed a letter, wrought with more than usual fidelity to rustic character.

295. "AND THE PRAYER OF FAITH SHALL SAVE THE SICK." (*J. Phillip.*)

I never yet saw so much progress made by any painter in one year as Mr. Phillip has made, from his stiff black

[1] [The following quotation from Sir David Brewster's *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton*, vol. i. ch. ii., was given in the Academy Catalogue: "When sitting alone in the garden, and speculating on the power of gravity, it occurred to him, that as the same power by which the apple fell to the ground, . . . it might extend to the moon and retain her in her orbit." According to Brewster, the popular anecdotes about Newton's dog Diamond, the constant but incurious attendant of his master's researches, are purely mythical (*ibid.*, ii. 138).]

[2] [J. M. Carrick was one of the members of the Hogarth Club (1859), to which Ruskin, D. G. Rossetti, and most of the men in sympathy with the Pre-Raphaelite movement, belonged.]

Digitized by Google

and red figures and fans of last year, to this very sweet picture: the principal head, with its opalescent earring, is quite beautiful. There are several other works of great character and power by this painter.[1]

300. An Interior. (*F. D. Hardy.*)

An exquisite little piece of interior painting, hurt only by some conventionality in finishing. For instance, how is it possible that, the sunbeams entering only by that one small window, the principal figures should be in full light, or the shadow fall at a steep angle from the knife-handle over the block in the left-hand corner? But, with his powers of execution, a little more faithfulness will make Mr. Hardy a perfect painter in this kind.

311. The Novice. (*J. C. Horsley, A.*[2])

There is always a sweet feeling in Mr. Horsley's pictures. This is an old story, but prettily told—the elder nuns watching anxiously and pitifully, and the dove seeking rest in the bosom.

312. Mid-Spring. (*J. W. Inchbold.*)

Though not a satisfactory picture, this is one of the most curious efforts of the Pre-Raphaelites this year. The place chosen has been a lovely spot, and the execution of the hyacinths and grass is as close and wonderful a piece of work as there is on the room walls. Take a magnifying glass and look at the squirrel and bird on the tree high up on the left, and the two other birds flying in the wood beyond, and give time to the whole, and it will please you. But Mr. Inchbold must choose subjects with more mass

[1] [248. "Agua Fresca: on one of the bridle-roads in Spain." 329. "Dona Pepita." 535. "A Gipsy Water-Carrier of Seville."]

[2] [John Callcott Horsley (1817–1903) was elected A.R.A. in 1855, and R.A. in 1864. His first picture at the Academy (1839) is now in the Tate Gallery (No. 446). He was for many years Treasurer of the Academy, and took an active part in promoting the annual exhibitions of "Old Masters."]

Digitized by Google

of shade in them; this was, in its essential nature, impracticable, the light being all too high for imitation. Hence the apparent hardness of result.

It is quite worth while, some day, to bring a small opera-glass with you into the architectural room, to examine the exquisite painting of withered heather, and rock, in Mr. Inchbold's other picture, 1187 ["The Burn, November: the Cucullen Hills"].

320. THE GLEN, CHUDLEIGH, DEVON. (*W. F. Witherington, R.A.*)

Here is another great advance on the picture of last year:[1] hurt a good deal by want of shadow-tone on the figures, and perhaps also by too great richness of subject. This excess of quantity is a grievous temptation to all artists: many of Turner's largest works were destroyed by it.[2] Everything that is beyond the spectator's power of easy attention, and is yet not so perfectly painted as to call for his fully *excited* attention, hurts a picture instead of helping it.

352. CHATTERTON.[3] (*H. Wallis.*)

Faultless and wonderful: a most noble example of the great school. Examine it well inch by inch: it is one of the pictures which intend, and accomplish, the entire placing before your eyes of an actual fact—and that a solemn one. Give it much time. Mr. Wallis has another very wonderful effort, 516,[4] but it is harder and less successful. I suppose the face of Marvell is a portrait, but he does not look to me like a person who would return a bribe.

[1] [See above, p. 20.]

[2] [Compare *Notes on the Turner Gallery*, Vol. XIII. pp. 129–130.]

[3] [This picture, by Mr. Henry Wallis (*b.* 1830), is now in the Tate Gallery (No. 1685). Ruskin was equally enthusiastic about the painter's Academy pictures in the following years (see pp. 113, 153.]

[4] ["Andrew Marvell returning the Bribe." The subject was explained by the following quotation: "Persuaded that Marvell would be theirs (the Administration's) for properly asking, they sent his old schoolfellow, the Lord Treasurer Danby, to renew acquaintance with him in his garret. At parting, the Lord Treasurer, out of

Digitized by Google

398. THE SCAPEGOAT (Lev. xvi.). (*W. H. Hunt.*[1])

This singular picture, though in many respects faultful, and in some wholly a failure, is yet the one of all in the gallery which should furnish us with most food for thought. First, consider it simply as an indication of the temper and

pure affection, slipped into his hand an order upon the treasury for £1000, and then went to his chariot. Marvell, looking at the paper, calls after the Treasurer, 'My lord, I request another moment.' They went up again to the garret, and Jack, the servant boy, was called. 'Jack, child, what had I for dinner yesterday?' 'Don't you remember, sir, you had the little shoulder of mutton that you ordered me to bring home from a woman in the market?' 'Very right, child. What have I for dinner to-day?' 'Don't you know, sir, that you bid me lay by the *blade bone to broil?*' '"Tis so; very right, child; go away.' 'My lord, do you hear that? Andrew Marvell's dinner is provided; there's your piece of paper—I want it not. I know the sort of kindness you intended. I live here to serve my constituents; the ministry may seek men for their purpose—*I am not one.*'" The passage comes from Hartley Coleridge's *Lives of Northern Worthies*, 1852, vol. i. p. 88.]

[1] [For Ruskin's earliest references to Holman Hunt, see the letters to the *Times* of 1851, reprinted in Vol. XII. pp. 323, 324. In *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (*ibid.*, pp. 160, 161) Ruskin again called attention to Hunt's work. To the Academy of 1854 the painter sent "The Light of the World" (now in Keble College, Oxford) and "The Awakening Conscience." Ruskin wrote letters to the *Times* (May 5, 25) in description and praise of the pictures (Vol. XII. pp. 328–335). In the third volume of *Modern Painters* (1856) Ruskin referred to Hunt's choice of noble subject; and to his "Light of the World" as "the most perfect instance of expressional purpose with technical power which the world has yet produced." He also defended that picture from the charge of plagiarism (Vol. V. pp. 52, 429). In vol. iv. (1856) Ruskin again referred to Hunt's careful truth to Nature (Vol. VI. p. 80). Ruskin's praise did not avail, however, to find Hunt ready purchasers (see *Contemporary Review*, June 1886); and in the fifth volume of *Modern Painters* (1860) Ruskin refers to him as "fighting his way through all neglect and obloquy to the painting of 'Christ in the Temple'" (pt. ix. ch. xii. § 9). In his later writings Ruskin also occasionally referred to Hunt. In the *Eagle's Nest* (1872), the "Light of the World" is referred to "as the most true and useful piece of religious vision which realistic art has yet embodied" (§ 115); see also *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, No. 2. In his lectures on *The Art of England* (1884), D. G. Rossetti and Holman Hunt were taken by Ruskin as masters of "Realistic Schools of Painting," where a further reference to "The Scapegoat" is made in § 11. With the analysis of Hunt's work there given (with special reference to "The Triumph of the Innocents") should be compared a passage in "The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism" (in *On the Old Road*, i. § 247, reprinted in a later volume of this edition). Holman Hunt's account of the circumstances in which he painted the "Scapegoat," and of the adventures he went through, is given in the *Contemporary Review*, 1886, pp. 829, 830. See also "*Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures in the Holman Hunt Exhibition held at the Fine Art Society*, 1886," p. 9. Rossetti wrote of Hunt's pictures in this year's Academy: "Hunt sends only 'Scapegoat'—a grand thing, but not for the public—and a few lovely landscape drawings." Madox Brown wrote in his diary: "Hunt's 'Scapegoat' requires to be seen to be believed in. Only then can it be understood how, by the might of genius, out of an old goat, and some saline incrustations, can be made one of the most tragic and impressive works in the annals of art." Gambart, the picture-dealer, was less enthusiastic. "I wanted," he said, "a nice religious picture, and he painted me a great goat."]

Digitized by Google

aim of the rising artists of England. Until of late years, young painters have been mostly divided into two groups: one poor, hard-working, and suffering, compelled more or less, for immediate bread, to obey whatever call might be made upon them by patron or publisher; the other, of perhaps more manifest cleverness or power, able in some degree to command the market, and apt to make the pursuit of art somewhat complementary to that of pleasure, so that a successful artist's studio has not been in general a place where idle and gay people would have found themselves ill at ease, or at a loss for amusement. But here is a young painter, the slave neither of poverty nor pleasure,—emancipated from the garret, despising the green room, and selecting for his studio a place where he is liable certainly to no agreeable forms of interruption. He travels, not merely to fill his portfolio with pretty sketches, but in as determined a temper as ever mediæval pilgrim, to do a certain work in the Holy Land. Arrived there, with the cloud of Eastern War gathered to the north of him, and involving, for most men, according to their adventurous or timid temper, either an interest which would at once have attracted them to its immediate field, or a terror which would have driven them from work in its threatening neighbourhood, he pursues calmly his original purpose; and while the hills of the Crimea were white with tents of war, and the fiercest passions of the nations of Europe burned in high funeral flames over their innumerable dead, one peaceful English tent was pitched beside a shipless sea, and the whole strength of an English heart spent in painting a weary goat, dying upon its salt sand.

And utmost strength of heart it needed. Though the tradition that a bird cannot fly over this sea is an exaggeration, the air in its neighbourhood is stagnant and pestiferous, polluted by the decaying vegetation brought down by the Jordan in its floods; the bones of the beasts of burden that have died by the "way of the sea,"[1] lie like

[1] [Isaiah ix. 1; Matthew iv. 15.]

Digitized by Google

wrecks upon its edge, bared by the vultures and bleached by the salt ooze, which, though tideless, rises and falls irregularly, swollen or wasted. Swarms of flies, fed on the carcases, darken an atmosphere heavy at once with the poison of the marsh and the fever of the desert; and the Arabs themselves will not encamp for a night amidst the exhalations of the volcanic chasm.

This place of study the young English painter chooses. He encamps a little way above it; sets his easel upon its actual shore; pursues his work with patience through months of solitude; and paints, crag by crag, the purple mountains of Moab, and, grain by grain, the pale ashes of Gomorrah.

And I think his object was one worthy of such an effort. Of all the scenes in the Holy Land, there are none whose present aspect tends so distinctly to confirm the statements of Scripture as this condemned shore. It is therefore exactly the scene of which it might seem most desirable to give a perfect idea to those who cannot see it for themselves; it is that also which fewest travellers are able to see; and which, I suppose, no one but Mr. Hunt himself would ever have dreamed of making the subject of a close pictorial study. The work was therefore worth his effort; and he has connected it in a simple, but most touching way, with other subjects of reflection, by the figure of the animal upon its shore. This is, indeed, one of the instances in which the subject of a picture is wholly incapable of explaining itself; but, as we are too apt—somewhat too hastily—to accept at once a subject as intelligible and rightly painted, if we happen to know enough of the story to interest us in it, so we are apt, somewhat unkindly, to refuse a painter the little patience of inquiry or remembrance, which, once granted, would enable him to interest us all the more deeply, because the thoughts suggested were not entirely familiar. It is necessary, in this present instance, only to remember that the view taken by the Jews of the appointed sending forth of

Digitized by Google

the scapegoat into the Wilderness was that it represented the carrying away of their sin into a place uninhabited and forgotten; and that the animal on whose head the sin was laid became accursed, so that, "though not commanded by the law, they used to maltreat the goat *Azazel*;—to spit upon him, and to pluck off his hair."* The goat, thus tormented, and with a scarlet fillet bound about its brow, was driven by the multitude wildly out of the camp, and pursued into the Wilderness. The painter supposes it to have fled towards the Dead Sea, and to be just about to fall exhausted at sunset—its hoofs entangled in the crust of salt upon the shore. The opposite mountains, seen in the fading light, are that chain of Abarim on which Moses died.[1]

Now, we cannot, I think, esteem too highly, or receive too gratefully, the temper and the toil which have produced this picture for us. Consider for a little while the feelings involved in its conception, and the self-denial and resolve needed for its execution; and compare them with the modes of thought in which our former painters used to furnish us annually with their "Cattle pieces" or "Lake scenes," and I think we shall see cause to hold this picture as one more truly honourable to us, and more deep and sure in its promise of future greatness in our schools of painting, than all the works of "high art" that since the foundation of the Academy have ever taxed the wonder, or weariness, of the English public. But, at the same time, this picture indicates a danger to our students of a kind hitherto unknown in any school—the danger of a too great intensity of feeling, making them forget the requirements of painting as an *art*. This picture regarded merely as a landscape, or as a composition, is a total failure. The mind of the painter has been so excited by the circumstances of the scene, that, like

* Sermon preached at Lothbury, by the Rev. H. Melvill. (*Pulpit*, Thursday, March 27, 1856.[2])

[1] [*Deuteronomy* xxxii. 49, 50.]
[2] [For Melvill, see Vol. I. p. 490 *n*. For the scapegoat, see *Leviticus* xvi. 10.]

Digitized by Google

a youth expressing his earnest feeling by feeble verse (which seems to him good, because he *means* so much by it), Mr. Hunt has been blinded by his intense sentiment to the real weakness of the pictorial expression; and in his earnest desire to paint the Scapegoat, has forgotten to ask himself first, whether he could paint a goat at all.

I am not surprised that he should fail in painting the distant mountains; for the forms of large distant landscape are a quite new study to the Pre-Raphaelites, and they cannot be expected to conquer them at first: but it is a great disappointment to me to observe, even in the painting of the goat itself, and of the fillet on its brow, a nearly total want of all that effective manipulation which Mr. Hunt displayed in his earlier pictures. I do not say that there is absolute want of skill—there may be difficulties encountered which I do not perceive—but the difficulties, whatever they may have been, are not conquered: this may be very faithful and very wonderful painting—but it is not *good* painting; and much as I esteem feeling and thought in all works of art, still I repeat, again and again, a painter's business is first to *paint*. No one could sympathize more than I with the general feeling displayed in the "Light of the World"; but unless it had been accompanied with perfectly good nettle painting, and ivy painting, and jewel painting, I should never have praised it;[1] and though I acknowledge the good purpose of this picture, yet, inasmuch as there is no good hair painting, nor hoof painting in it,* I hold it to be good only as an omen, not as an

* I believe, however, the painter was under worse difficulty in painting this goat than even with his sheep picture,[2] it being, of course, impossible to get the animal to stand still for a moment in an attitude indicating utter weariness. Observe also, that though heavily painted, yet being done every whit from Nature, the picture lights the room, far away, just as Turner's used to do (and compare the notes on Nos. 873 and 1002). Only

[1] [See Vol. XII. p. 331.]

[2] ["Strayed Sheep," exhibited at the Academy in 1853—sheep in a cliff landscape, studied near Hastings. Ruskin refers to the picture in the *Art of England* (§ 11) as marking an era in landscape painting. It is in the possession of Mr. George L. Craik, by whom it was lent to the Ruskin Exhibition at Manchester, 1904 (No. 195).]

Digitized by Google

achievement; and I have hardly ever seen a composition, left apparently almost to chance, come so unluckily: the insertion of the animal in the exact centre of the canvas making it look as if it were painted for a sign. I can only, therefore, in thanking Mr. Hunt heartily for his work, pray him, for practice' sake, now to paint a few pictures with less feeling in them, and more handling.

418. Subject and painter not yet named in the Catalogue.[1] The former, not very intelligible; the latter is reported to be a younger member of the new school—Mr. Burton. His work is masterly, at all events, and he seems capable of the greatest things.

448. AUTUMN LEAVES.[2] (*J. E. Millais, A.*)

By much the most poetical work the painter has yet conceived; and also, as far as I know, the first instance

Turner never makes a reflection in water brighter than the sky above it, which, unless the crystals of salt whiten the surface even of this glowing water, seems to be the case here. I suppose the water was painted at one season of the year and the sky at another—both from nature, but, in result, discordant, and afterwards unalterable, as the complex hues of those far-followed reflections do not admit of "toning down," but by separately repainting every one. Observe, finally, the picture should, if possible, be seen on a dark day, or in twilight, when its fullest effect is developed.

[1] [They were supplied in later editions of the Academy Catalogue as "A Wounded Cavalier," by W. S. Burton. The subject is a Cavalier whose despatches have been stolen from him as he journeyed through a wood, while he, sorely wounded, has been left to die, until later a Puritan and his lady pass by. She stops to tend the wounded man, while the Puritan looks sourly on. The picture had been overlooked by the Hanging Committee. At the last moment, C. W. Cope, R.A., came upon it in a room by itself with its face to the wall, and withdrew a picture of his own to make room for it. The "Wounded Cavalier" was hung on the line next to Holman Hunt's "Scapegoat." The artist's letter giving the title, etc., was found in time for the second edition of the catalogue. These particulars have been given by Mr. W. S. Burton, who adds a curious story of a conspiracy against him by blackmailing underlings whom he had refused to "tip" (see *The Bazaar*, June 28, 1897). Mr. Burton, who had gained the gold medal at the Academy for historical painting, had his next year's picture—"A London Magdalen"—rejected, and was not more fortunate in later years. An interesting account of this artist, who in recent years resumed the practice of painting, will be found in P. H. Bate's *The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters*, p. 81, where also a reproduction of this picture is given.]

[2] [This picture, now in the Corporation Gallery at Manchester, shows four girls piling leaves for autumn burning. The landscape was painted at Annat Lodge,

Digitized by Google

existing of a perfectly painted twilight. It is as easy, as it is common, to give obscurity to twilight, but to give the glow within its darkness is another matter; and though Giorgione might have come near the glow, he never gave the valley mist. Note also the subtle difference between the purple of the long nearer range of hills, and the blue of the distant peak emerging beyond.

515. View on the Banks of the Thames at Maidenhead. (*J. D. Harding.*[1])

A very beautiful and well composed Harding: but *not* a view on the Thames at Maidenhead. The hills in this picture vary from 1,500 to 2,000 feet in height. The clouds are admirably arranged: it is the best composed sky, after Lewis's, that I see in the rooms. But, considering Mr. Harding's well-known skill in trees, I am vexed, partly with myself and partly with him, because, after long consideration, I am totally unable to form a guess as to the species of tree meant in the group to the left.

532. The Prosperous Days of Job. (*W. T. C. Dobson.*)

One of the earnest readings of Scripture which are the truest pride of modern art. How often has Job been painted with the look of a haggard, aged, and despairing mendicant—how seldom, in this first era of his life, the refined Oriental lord; leading a life of mercy, and judgment, and truth. The despair indicated in the writhe of the lips and pressure of the knit hands on the head, in the fallen figure, is thoroughly grand; and the watching female figure above is very tender and lovely. All Mr. Dobson's works

Perthshire, an old house with a cedared garden near Bowerswell, which Millais took after his marriage. The two taller girls were Millais's little sisters-in-law, afterwards Mrs. Stibbard and Mrs. Caird; the others were the gardener's children. The picture, it has been said, was the fount of inspiration of Mason and Fred Walker (Spielmann's *Millais and his Works*, p. 92).]

[1] [For James Duffield Harding (1798–1863), Ruskin's drawing-master and friend, see Vol. III. p. 200, Vol. IV. p. xxxv., and the General Index.]

Digitized by Google

are good (though this is the best),[1] as far as feeling is concerned; but their colour, or rather want of colour, is deeply to be regretted. Does Mr. Dobson really see Nature as always white and buff—or does he think Buff a specially sacred colour?[2] In *my* mind, it is associated chiefly with troopers' jerkins.

542. MARKET-DAY. (*G. B. O'Neill.*)

Of the old school, but very delicately painted. There is far too much in it to be natural. It is a map of a market-day, instead of a picture of one.

578. APRIL LOVE. (*A. Hughes.*[3])

Exquisite in every way; lovely in colour, most subtle in the quivering expression of the lips, and sweetness of the tender face, shaken, like a leaf by winds upon its dew, and hesitating back into peace.

A second very disgraceful piece of bad placing[4]—the thrusting this picture thus aside!

583. CHIOGGIAN FISHING VESSELS, ETC., RUNNING INTO THE LAGUNE OF VENICE, ON THE APPROACH OF A BORASCO OR VIOLENT SQUALL, ON THE ADRIATIC. (*E. W. Cooke, A.*[5])

Another instance of the extraordinary good fortune which characterizes the exhibition of this year, in possessing

[1] [There was only one other picture by him in the exhibition of 1856—No. 310, "The Parable of the Children in the Market-Place."]

[2] [See below, p. 114, and on the general subject—of the sanctity of colour—see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 281, 321), vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 68); and Vol. X. pp. 173, 457.]

[3] [Mr. Arthur Hughes (*b.* 1830), though not an enrolled member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, was closely identified with them, and always worked in sympathy with their aims. He combined with Millais and Rossetti to illustrate William Allingham's *Day and Night Songs*, and he was one of the group by whom the frescoes in the Oxford Union were executed. "April Love" was bought from the painter by William Morris. It is now in the possession of Mr. H. Boddington. A reproduction of it, with an appreciation of the painter, may be found in P. H. Bate's *English Pre-Raphaelite Painters.*]

[4] [For the first, see above, p. 52.]

[5] [Edward William Cooke (1811–1880) was promoted to the rank of R.A. in 1864. He "hunted quarries across the foam" in many directions—in Normandy, on the

Digitized by Google

the happiest efforts of almost every master. Do any of us recollect so impressive a study of shipping as this by Mr. Cooke, much as he has hunted such quarries across the foam? It is admirably true to the Venetian boat—and the Venetian boat and all the ways of it are beautiful.

592. HIGHLAND MARY. (*T. Faed.*)

Mr. Faed's best work this year; very lovely in its kind; and the distance, though conventional, well composed. Mr. Faed's time for repentance does not seem yet to have come —he will paint grandly, I think, when it does. His other picture[1] is a mere echo of the popular one of last year.

615. MARY MAGDALENE AT THE SEPULCHRE. (*H. Le Jeune.*[2])

Another earnest and most touching reading of Scripture. I never saw that gaze of Mary into the sepulchre

Mediterranean coasts, at Venice, in Spain, and Scandinavia, and Egypt. Several pictures by him are in the Tate Gallery, and pictures and drawings at South Kensington. Ruskin made his acquaintance at Venice in 1851. There is a character-sketch of him in a letter to Ruskin's father :—

> "*7th December* [1851].— . . . I miss to-day, at my morning prayers, Mr. Cooke—who used to make the responses in a most serious and earnest manner. The smallest clever man I ever knew . . . full of affection, most unselfish, ready to help all the world, and full of accurate and valuable knowledge in natural history—with which he is always overflowing at wrong times, flying perpetually from one thing to another; and yet, if you ask him a plain question about something which you really want to know, you get no answer. He knows a thousand things apropos of it, but not *It*. If you would like to see some very curious and laborious sketches of the Ducal Palace, and will just send a line to the Ferns, Victoria Road, Kensington, to know when he would be at home, he would be delighted to see you, and will tell you a great deal about us. He is the most curious mixture of conceit and humility I ever met with. They have just made him an associate R.A. Now, he has as good a right to be R.A. as anybody —far better than Lee, Creswick—or Roberts; but he felt it such a high honour that it quite threw him into a fever of excitement, which I in vain endeavoured to allay by informing him it was no honour at all—unless to the Academy. But his tiny self-importance and affectionateness came out, in his telling us the next day that 'all the artists in London had been quite in a state of excitement about it (his election),' and that their sympathy was most gratifying!"

For other remarks on Venetian boats, see *Harbours of England* (Vol. XIII. p. 18).]

[1] [No. 273, "Home and the Homeless."]

[2] [Henry Le Jeune (1819–1904) gained the gold medal of the Royal Academy in 1844, and was afterwards elected an Associate.]

Digitized by Google

—just before she "turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing"[1]—given so faithfully. Much fault might be found with the mere painting; but I will find none! for the main and moving facts are there. Give the picture time, and it will bring tears.

1190. THE EVE OF ST. AGNES. (*A. Hughes.*)

A noble picture, apparently too hastily finished, and very wrongly put into this room. It looks too blue; but remember it is entirely a night piece, admitting moonlight into the chambers; and if a piece of real moonlight were seen, instead of the picture, through the walls of the room, it would look just as strangely blue: the fault which the eye catches is chiefly that the blue glass casts a white light, and the colours in the left hand subject are confused in relation. The ivy on the tree trunk has clearly been done without a natural model, and is not creditable to the painter of the ivy in No. 578. The half-entranced, half-startled, face of the awaking Madeline is exquisite; but the lover's in both the centre and right-hand subjects very far from satisfactory. If, however, the reader knows the poem, he will be grateful for the picture; and there is promise in it of high excellence.[2]

873, 885, 1002 are three intensely faithful studies in the East, by Holman Hunt.[3] The gleam of the Dead Sea in the distance of 873 is quite marvellous, and the drawing of the Sphinx is an invaluable record. Probably the reader who has never studied natural facts will think the colouring extraordinary, as Turner's used to be thought. It is,

[1] [John xx. 14.]

[2] [A reproduction of this picture—an illustration of Keats' poem in three compartments—will be found at p. 182 of *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham.* "Hughes' 'Eve of St. Agnes,'" wrote Rossetti, "will make his fortune, I feel sure."]

[3] [873. "View from the Mount of Offence, looking toward the Dead Sea and the Mountains of Moab: Morning." 885. "Jerusalem by Moonlight: looking over the site of the Temple to the Mount of Olives." 1002. "The Sphinx, Gizeh, looking towards the pyramids of Sakhara."]

Digitized by Google

nevertheless, precisely true—touch for touch. I have given the reasons of its apparent want of truth in *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. ch. iii. § 8 *et seq.*[1]

I must here close my *Notes* on the present exhibition, though I know that I have missed count of many good pictures; but I am somewhat tired with previous work, and cannot meet the large range of excellence in the Academy this year with correlative exertion. One or two works, also, I have to note in other exhibitions.

[1] [In this edition, Vol. VI. pp. 54 *seq.* The completion of the third and fourth volumes of *Modern Painters* was doubtless the "previous work" here referred to.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS[1]

THE pictures in this pleasant room are so easily distinguishable and accessible, that I think it will be better to refer to them in the order of their importance (or that which seems to me such), than in the regular succession of the catalogue.

1. No. 134.

[A Frank encampment in the desert of Mount Sinai, 1842—the convent of St. Catherine in the distance. The picture comprises portraits of an English nobleman and his suite; Mahmoud, the Dragoman, etc.; Hussein, Scheikh of Gebel Tor, etc.—*J. F. Lewis.*]

If this picture is painted in firm colours, and will stand against time; and if it gets into good hands, and is safely kept, it will one day be among things which men will come to England from far away to see, and will go back to their homes saying, "I have seen it," as people come

[1] [The Society of Painters in Water-Colours, often referred to as the "Old" Water-Colour Society, was founded in 1805; its first exhibitions were held at No. 20 Lower Brook Street. After various moves, it settled in 1809 at Spring Gardens. In 1813 it was reconstituted as "The Oil and Water-Colour Society." In 1821 the Society was again reconstructed as a Water-Colour Society only, and it established itself in Pall Mall, East. In the *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, Ruskin gives a pleasant description of the exhibitions held there in his earlier days (p. 389 of this volume, and compare *The Art of England*, § 159). Ruskin was elected an honorary member in 1873, and "was very proud of the honour. He said at the time to a visitor—'Nothing ever pleased me more. I have always been abusing the artists, and now they have complimented me. It's very nice to think they give me credit for knowing something about art'" (W. G. Collingwood's Prefatory Notes to the Ruskin Exhibition held at the Society's Gallery in 1901, p. ix.). Ruskin occasionally showed drawings in the Society's rooms. In 1881 the Society was permitted to make use of the name and style of "The Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours." The gallery was extended and rebuilt in 1875.]

Digitized by Google

back now from Venice, saying they have seen Titian's "Peter Martyr";[1] or from Milan, saying they have seen the "Sposalizio." I have no hesitation in ranking it among the most *wonderful* pictures in the world; nor do I believe that, since the death of Paul Veronese, anything has been painted comparable to it in its own way.

I rank it with Veronese's work, because it is painted on the same principles of colour and design; and shows just as much ease of hand, though the execution is modified by the smallness of scale, and by the resolution to obtain certain effects of light which the Venetian would not have cared for: but if this picture were magnified so as to show the figures the size of life, it would be felt at once that no work but Veronese's could stand against it for a moment; and I only regret that its admirableness of detail should be concentrated so as to become, to most people, all but invisible. If the reader will take a magnifying glass to it, and examine it touch by touch, he will find that, literally, any four square inches of it contain as much as an ordinary water-colour drawing; nay, he will, perhaps, become aware of refinements in its handling which escape the naked eye altogether. Let him examine, for instance, with a good lens, the eyes of the camels, and he will find there is as much painting beneath their drooping fringes as would, with most painters, be thought enough for the whole head; or let him look at the cane-work of the back of the chair on the right, and he will find as many touches in one of its meshes as, according to the notion of water-colour painting ordinarily, would suffice for the tracery of a Gothic window.

Yet, marvellous as this quantity of detail is, the quantity is not the chief wonder, but the *breadth*. It is amazing that there should be so much, but far more amazing that this Much should all be Right. Labour and delicacy we may find, unwearied and unsurpassable, in missal painting, and in

[1] [This picture perished by fire in the sacristy of SS. Giovanni e Paolo in 1866; see Vol. III. p. 23, and compare p. 399, below. Raphael's "Sposalizio" is in the Brera.]

Digitized by Google

old Flemish work of the Van Eyck school. But labour thus concentrated in large purpose—detail thus united into effective mass—has not been seen until now. All minute work has been, more or less, broken work; and the most precious pictures were divisible by segments. But here, gradations which are wrought out through a thousand threads or meshes, are as broad and calm in unity as if struck with a single sweep of the hand. Look at the way the pale circle of the tent is gradated, through its woven pattern, with the effect of transparent light beneath. I have never seen anything quite comparable to it reached by art.*

Let us, however, recovering as best we may from our amazement at this toil, and this success, look for a little while at the meaning of the picture—meaning which we find indicated by the painter in the most subtle way. The hand of the principal figure droops negligently at its side, yet so as to point to an unfolded map. The letters on this map are of course reversed, as it lies open rightly for its owner, therefore upside down to the spectator; but the title of it is carefully made legible—

"MAP OF"

"SYRIA,"

"ANCIENT AND MODERN."

and the picture itself is a map of antiquity and modernism in the East—the Englishman encamped under Mount Sinai.

The reader must pardon me a momentary allusion to work of my own; for it has not been without some toil that I, also, have been lately endeavouring to trace the kind of contrast which exists between the ancient and modern temper of the human race. Mr. Lewis was wholly ignorant of my work, and I of his. In closing an inquiry into the

* Merely as a piece of technical composition, note the way in which this canopy is repeated and balanced by the matting below; hide the matting with the hand, and see how top-heavy the canopy becomes. The dead fawn, in like manner, repeats and relieves the colour-mass of the principal standing camel.

Digitized by Google

modern feeling respecting scenery consecrated by solemn associations, I said,—

"I do not know if there be game on Sinai, but I am always expecting to hear of some one shooting over it."[1]

Some of those semi-serious people who never know earnest from jest, accused me of levity in saying this. I said it not in levity, but in stern soberness; yet certainly it was with strange surprise that I saw that this great painter had given his year's labour to develop a similar thought, and that, four months only after the sentence was written, the most notable picture on the exhibition walls of London was an accurate fulfilment of its words:—Mount Sinai, with a foreground of dead game.

Special examination of the points of various interest in this picture is, of course, impossible—it would need a separate essay. I shall only note one or two things which, under any circumstances, the reader should not miss.

Note first the labour in the sky. The whole field of it is wrought gradually out with touches no larger than the filaments of a feather. It is, in fact, an embroidered sky—Penelope's web was slight work compared to it;—such a thing, as far as I know, never painter endured to do before. The purpose of this is to get the peculiar look of heat haze, and depth of colour, with light, which there is in all skies of warm climates. It cannot be got otherwise: but, inasmuch as whatever work may be given to it, it cannot, in some respects, be got at all, the *light* of it being unapproachable, it almost grieves me to see the labour spent to obtain only an approximate result. Still in this one picture, I feel that it ought to have been done, in order that all might be as well as it could be.

Secondly, examine the rock drawing of the Sinai, exquisite alike in hue and form, and conquering, stone by stone, the difficulty which, to all landscape painters but Turner, has been hitherto unconquerable, of expressing fallen masses of débris in their endless complexity.

[1] [The reference is to *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (1856) ch. xvi. ("Of Modern Landscape") § 11 (Vol. V. p. 324).]

Digitized by Google

If I venture to speak of a fault in this part of the work, it is only as acknowledging that human strength must always fail somewhere: Veronese is sometimes too flat—Tintoret sometimes too dark—Leonardo sometimes too hard—Turner sometimes too mysterious—Lewis sometimes too definite. Throughout this picture we may trace, here and there, a slightly *linear* violence; as, for instance, in the black outline round the lower part of the dead fawn in the foreground, which is not entirely true, and gives the work, here and there, a slight aspect of meagreness. The lines of fissure and shadow on the rocks, and round the stones of the distant Sinai, are thus a little too sharp and thin; indicating some remains of the painter's old manner of using the pencil point, as in his sketches in Spain.

The faces, however, as well as the draperies, are entirely free from this fault, and the intensity of character reached in them surpasses, I think, all the painter's former efforts. Even the more distant figures are full of portrait character of the most perfect finish. It may be useful to any reader who is himself fond of drawing, to note the subtlety of *truth* on which all depends. Take, for instance, the head of the Arab between the Sheikh and the camel, and note the dim sparkle of light in one eye, missed in the other. A common painter would have put it into both; but he would have spoiled the head, for it could not have been in both. The point of light in the right one is the reflection, on the under part of the ball, of the light from the nose, which could, of course, be seen on the sunlighted side only. The Arab, whose face is half seen behind the tassel of the housings of one of the camels, which takes the place of his beard, is another thoroughly grand piece of character. There seems much difference of opinion as to the type of head adopted for the figure of the Englishman. I think it very right;—quiet, delicate, firm, and Cœur-de-Lion-like.[1] The two dogs, like all Lewis's animals, are inimitable.

[1] [Ruskin was fond of taking Richard as a type: see, *e.g.*, Vol. V. p. 198, and devoted Letter iii. of *Fors Clavigera* to "Richard of England."]

Digitized by Google

I have nearly exhausted terms of praise, and have none left, now, strong enough for the complexity and skill of the *composition*. The deliciousness of some of the bits of grey and pale flickering colour, and the way the innumerable lines and hues flow together, without flaw or a fallacy anywhere, complete the strange merits and marvels of this work. I trust, whatever its destination, that measures may be taken to preserve it from excess of light and from damp. Body-colour preserved (as in manuscripts) in shade, and kept dry, has stood unchanged for six hundred years; but the slightest adverse influences are to be dreaded for a work of this delicacy, when so much depends upon so little, and when every gleam of colour is precious.[1]

It will be observed that on each side of this brilliant and delicate picture is hung a drawing of excessive darkness and boldness, by David Cox.[2] This was thoroughly well judged—there is no rivalship—but a kindly and effective contrast. The two drawings of English moors (128, 140) gain in gloom and power by the opposition to the Arabian sunlight; and Lewis's finish is well set off by the impatient breadth of Cox. No. 140 is a very interesting example of this master; so also the smaller ones, 234, 240.[3]

88. Her Majesty the Queen inspecting the Wounded Coldstream Guards in the Hall of Buckingham Palace. (*John Gilbert.*[4])

A very interesting and successful drawing, apparently full of good portraiture, and certainly of right expression. It

[1] [Elsewhere Ruskin refers to this drawing (with Turner's of "Hornby Castle," in the South Kensington Museum) as "unsurpassable standards of water-colour painting" (see below, p. 340).]

[2] [See below, p. 195 *n.*]

[3] [128. "Driving the Flock." 140. "Peat Gatherers, North Wales." 234. "Twilight." 240. "Wind and Rain."]

[4] [Sir John Gilbert (1817–1897) began exhibiting in the London galleries in 1836; largely occupied in black-and-white work for book illustration and illustrated journalism; elected a member of the Old Water-Colour Society, 1854, of which he became President in 1871; knighted, 1872; A.R.A., 1872; R.A., 1876; in 1893 presented a number of his pictures to the municipal galleries of London, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester.]

Digitized by Google

is notable for its frank and firm execution; in general, artists are appalled by the presence of Majesty, and, in their earnest desire to do well, are apt to lose their power, and make their work too soft or too polished; but Mr. Gilbert has retained his presence of mind, and has given an effective rendering of a touching and memorable scene.

23. Huntsman's Boy and Bloodhounds. (*F. Tayler.*[1])

This is the best drawing Mr. Tayler has produced for some time, but best only inasmuch as it deals with a subject familiar both to him and to us, on a somewhat larger scale than usual. Indeed, as long as Mr. Tayler persists in his faith that natural form and colour are only to be represented by an ingenious imposition of slops or blots, it is quite useless to criticise his work. Beyond a certain point he cannot, by any physical possibility, advance: that point he had reached fifteen years ago, and it is not a high one.

256, 271. "An Itinerant." "Devotion."[2]

Two superb drawings by Mr. Hunt—fortunate in the features and expression of the models chosen, and, like all the master's work, consummate in execution. As a piece of artistical handling and dexterity, the woolly hair of the negro is a lesson which cannot be too long studied.

The other drawings by this master, in the room, are, of course, all good; but, perhaps, less *delightful* than usual. I miss his hawthorn blossom, mossy banks, and birds: there are two or three pounds of grapes—those in 285 ["Fruit"] particularly good; but, when not on the vine, grapes are

[1] [For a note on this painter, see below, p. 196. Ruskin was an early admirer of Tayler. In the *Poetry of Architecture* (1837) he had written (§ 5): "Observe the direction of public taste at any of our exhibitions. We see visitors at that of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours passing Tayler with anathemas, and Lewis with indifference, to remain in reverence and admiration before certain amiable white lambs and water-lilies, whose artists shall be nameless" (Vol. I. p. 7).]

[2] [No. 166 in the Prout and Hunt Exhibition: see p. 447 of this vol.]

Digitized by Google

precisely the dullest fruit that can be painted; and I can only advise, or beg, any reader who is inclined to attend to me, never in future to buy any of Hunt's grapes. He wastes an inconceivable quantity of time on them, and this is the fault of the public, for the grapes always sell.

1, 4. STUDIES OF LAKE SCENERY.[1] (*Mr. William Turner.*[2])

The works of this painter are always tender in feeling, but the larger of these is a strained and mistaken effort; the second is very true and right.

22, 167. TWO VERY INTERESTING STUDIES OF SEA.[3] (*Mr. S. P. Jackson.*[4])

The breaking of the low waves in 167 is as true as can be; and both pictures are delicate and earnest in perception of phenomena of sea and sky. The *land* is bad, in both.

20. Another study of the same class[5] (*Mr. Naftel*[6]); not so good in execution, but well meant. It looks as if painted on the spot, and the cirri in the sky are very true; there is a pleasant sense of the evening wind whistling among the stones as the sun touches their edges with its last gleam.

[1] [1. "Loch Garry, Inverness-shire: Autumn." 4. "Loch Torridon, Ross-shire: Before Morning."]

[2] [For William Turner, generally called "of Oxford," to distinguish him from the great Turner, see Vol. III. p. 472 *n.*, and Vol. V. p. 332.]

[3] [22. "The Breakwater and Chapel Rock at Bude, North Cornwall." 167. "The Sands at Bude."]

[4] [Samuel Phillips Jackson (*b.* 1830), who began to exhibit in 1853, made a speciality of coast scenery, intermixed in later years with inland scenes from Wales and on the Thames.]

[5] [20. "Collecting Vraic, on one of the natural breakwaters thrown up by the heavy seas from the Atlantic: Guernsey." 52. "The Evening Gun at Castle Cornet, Guernsey."]

[6] [Paul Jacob Naftel (*d.* 1891), a native of the Channel Islands, became an associate of the Water-Colour Society in 1850, and full member in 1859. He was for many years a drawing-master in Guernsey.]

Digitized by Google

The handling is, however, flat and coarse: each of these stones ought to have had nearly as much work on it as there is in the whole picture. 52 is also an earnest effort, though very faulty in the work on the water. Mr. Naftel will find, on testing his work accurately, that he has cast the shadows inconsistently on the castle, and they destroy the effect of its light.

68. A quiet and unaffected study[1] (*Mr. E. Duncan*[2]), remarkable for the absence of all meretricious character. I love colour as well as most people, but confess that a little less cobalt and vermilion would better most of the pictures on the walls of this room.

90. View in Glencoe. (*Mr. Rosenberg.*[3])

This is one of the truest pieces of mountain study in the room—evidently wholly from Nature, and though feeble in execution, satisfactory in general effect. But Mr. Rosenberg may depend upon it, mountains are quite as delicate as fruit, and he must take not less pains with them.

112, 165. Studies from Nature.[4] (*Mr. G. Fripp*, and *Mr. A. Glennie.*)

Very good in their way; yet rather things to be kept in the artists' folios, for their own use, than to be exhibited.

[1] [68. "Spithead, with part of the Baltic Fleet, from Ryde Sands."]

[2] [Edward Duncan (1803–1882) was a constant exhibitor from 1830 onwards. Some of his marine views have been published. For other references to him see below, p. 198, and Appendix v., p. 474.]

[3] [William F. Rosenberg (*d.* 1869) began to exhibit in 1848. "His name curiously foreshadowed a change that subsequently took place in his line of art. Beginning with flowers (and fruit), he ended with mountains." The drawing noticed above was his first mountain study (*History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, ii. 301).]

[4] [112. "Part of the Ruins of Corfe Castle: the Artisans' Tower." For Mr. Fripp, see below, p. 125. 165. "View in the Forum of Rome from the School of Xanthus; done on the spot."]

Digitized by Google

168. SUNRISE ON THE JUNGFRAU, FROM THE WENGERN ALP. (*Mr. W. Collingwood.*[1])

Striking in effect, and an attractive picture, but sadly wanting in accuracy of detail. If the artist would draw the mountain carefully, and then work out this same effect, with rock substance beneath it, he might produce a valuable drawing. And the effect itself, simple as it is, would have been twice as good if the artist had not indulged himself with a bright yellow light on his cow, and spots of pure white and yellow about the roots of his pines, while the first rays of dawn are still a mile or two above them, and cannot get down to them for an hour and a half yet, at the very least.

The picture, as it is, cannot be considered a study from Nature; and it forms a connecting link between the works above noticed, in which the artist's *intention*, at least, is to be true, and those forming the larger portion of the exhibition, in which the intention is to be pretty, or clever. These, though there is much dexterity in some of them, need not separately be noticed, as they involve little of interest, except variations in touch, or expedients for getting opposition in blue and orange, yellow and purple, according to the formulæ of colour-science. On the whole, the exhibition is greatly above the average; and the public seem to have discerned this, for the little bits of blue which the artists like to see completing their harmonies of colour, are now wanting to very few of the pictures. I am heartily glad to see this; for of all modes of spending money in self indulgence, none are perhaps so collaterally kind as the encouragement of an art so healthy and pleasurable as Water-colour Painting.

[1] [William Collingwood, born at Greenwich, April 23, 1819, studied under his cousin W. Collingwood Smith and his father's friend J. D. Harding, joined the New Water-Colour Society in 1845, and the Old Society (now R.W.S.) in 1855 as a painter of "interiors." The notice by Ruskin of his experiment in Alpine landscape induced him to devote himself almost entirely to Swiss subjects, which he exhibited at the R.W.S. down to his death at Bristol on June 25, 1903.]

Digitized by Google

I have no space left for detailed notice of the other exhibitions, but cannot pass unnamed the very remarkable picture in the rooms of the Society of British Artists,[1] No. 110, "Eavesdroppers," by J. Campbell, one of the most earnest pieces of domestic homely truth I have ever seen: nor, in the French Exhibition in Pall Mall, the series of cottage studies, by Edouard Frère,[2] 150 to 155,[3] quite unequalled, it seems to me, in sincerity and truth of conception, though somewhat dimly painted. (Compare note on pictures in Academy, No. 160, p. 55.) I ought, perhaps, to have said, truth of *sight*, rather than truth of conception; for I have been informed that this artist, rambling from cottage to cottage, and telling the peasantry "never to mind him," watches and seizes some real moment of action in the undisturbed family; recording, also, with historical fidelity, the position of every article of domestic furniture, and with such scrupulousness, that being on one occasion requested to enrich a somewhat blank piece of background by the addition of some piece of delf or pewter

[1] [For a note on this Society, see below, p. 139; and for the French Exhibition, p. 141.]

[2] [Pierre Edouard Frère (1819–1886), pupil of Paul Delaroche, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, 1855. Ruskin was "the first to recognise publicly in England" the "gentle power" of this French painter (see letter to the *Daily Telegraph* of October 7, 1870, reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. ii. p. 34, and in a later volume of this edition). In subsequent *Notes*, Ruskin praises this painter in similar manner (see pp. 142, 174, 251, and compare pp. 346, 347). In the *Cestus of Aglaia* (1865) he classes the domestic painting of Frère with Richter's in Germany and Hook's in England (§ 2). A description of one of Frère's "exquisite little painted poems" is given in *Aratra Pentelici* (§§ 111, 113); and in *The Art of England* his pictures of children are referred to as "of quite immortal beauty" (Lecture iv., § 108). In Ruskin's diary of 1859 there is an entry which is of interest in this connexion:—

> "Calais.—Before dinner, just under the ramparts, a little girl of about five years old was sitting outside her cottage door munching a slice of very nice white bread and butter. She had put a little deal stool in front of her, covered with buttercups and red daisies, and was reading a little book with great earnestness. I asked her what she was reading. She held up her book. It was a catechism with a generally moral tendency apparently; but the part she was at related to the treatment of thieves, by putting them in prison. She seemed highly interested, but I could not get her to tell me why. She made a perfect Frère with her flowers and book. I asked her where she got the flowers. 'From the ramparts.' 'What are you doing with them?' 'Je m'amuse.'"]

[3] 150: "The Evening Meal." 151: "The Breakfast." 152: "The Toilette." 153: "The Young Artist." 154: "Cold Morning." 155: "Return from Market."

Digitized by Google

which had caught the purchaser's eye in another study—"No," he replied, "I cannot do that: it was in another cottage."

I consider these pictures, therefore, as examples of true Historical Painting,[1] and of very high value. It is quite impossible to say what importance may, in some future day, attach to such records of the French peasant life of the 19th century.[2]

[1] [On this subject, see *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (Vol. XII. pp. 151–154).]

[2] [Here eds. 1 and 2 ended. The following "Postscript" appeared in eds. 3, 4, 5, and 6.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Burd Helen

By permission of Miss Caswall-Smith

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

POSTSCRIPT

GENERALLY speaking, the arrangement of the pictures in the Academy this year is better than usual; but the errors which are usually notable in various parts of the rooms seem to have been all concentrated in the one crying error of putting No. 122 nearly out of sight. I have a special dislike to pictures of a slate-grey colour, as well as of girls in dresses of pages; for which cause, in glancing round the room, I passed this "Burd Helen" by,[1] as one of the quaint

[1] [For a further reference by Ruskin to this picture, see below, pp. 233, 330, 331. It was, he said, one of the great Pre-Raphaelite pictures which "will hold their own with the most noble pictures of all time." The subject of the picture was taken from the Scottish Border ballad (another version of "Childe Waters") of the girl who ran by the side of her faithless lover while he rode, and who swam the Clyde, rather than that he should escape :—

"Lord John he rode, Burd Helen ran,
The live-lang summer's day,
Until they cam' to Clyde's Water,
Was filled frae bank to brae.

'See'st thou yon water, Helen,' quoth he,
'That flows frae bank to brim?'
'I trust to God, Lord John,' she said,
'You ne'er will see me swim.'"

See Aytoun's *Ballads of Scotland*, i. 239, where a slightly different version of it is given: it may also be found in *Percy's Reliques* (vol. iii. p. 59), under the title of "Childe Waters." Other versions of this ballad, and other ballads of the same name, and probably origin, may be found in Jameson's collection, vol. i. p. 117, vol. ii. p. 376, in Buchan's *Ancient Ballads of the North*, ii. 29 (1879 ed.), and in *Four Books of Scottish Ballads*, Edin., 1868, Bk. ii. p. 21, where it is well noted that "Burd Helen" corresponds to the "Proud Elise" of northern minstrels, "La Prude Dame Elise" of the French, and the "Gentle Lady Elise" of the English—(Burd, Prud, Preux). It is also possible that it is a corruption of Burdalayn, or Burdalane, meaning an only child, a maiden, etc. The painter was William Lindsay Windus, formerly a Liverpool artist, and a member of the Academy of that city. D. G. Rossetti was immensely struck by the picture. "The finest thing of all" in the Academy, he wrote. He "forced Ruskin to go with him to see it *instanter*, because he had not noticed it in his pamphlet, and extorted the promise of a postscript on its behalf" (*Letters to William Allingham*, pp. 187, 188). "I assure you," wrote Mr. Windus to Rossetti, "that you and Mr. Ruskin were the two persons in the world whose approbation I

Digitized by Google

efforts of some younger member of the rising school, neither deserving praise nor warranting discouragement. Further examination of it leads me to class it as the second picture of the year; its aim being higher, and its reserved strength greater, than those of any other work except the "Autumn Leaves." Its whiteness of colour results from the endeavour to give the cold grey of the northern fall of day, when the wind is bleak, and the clouds gathering for storm, their distant cumuli, heavy with rain, hanging on the rises of the moorland. I cannot see, at the distance of the picture from the eye, how far the painting of the pebbles and heath has been carried; but I see just enough of the figures to make me sure that the work is thoughtful and intense in the highest degree. The pressure of the girl's hand on her side; her wild, firm, desolate look at the stream—she not raising her eyes as she makes her appeal, for fear of the greater mercilessness in the human look than in the glaze of the gliding water—the just choice of the type of the rider's cruel face, and of the scene itself—so terrible in haggardness of rattling stones and ragged heath,—are all marks of the action of the very grandest imaginative power, shortened only of hold upon our feelings because dealing with a subject too fearful to be for a moment believed true. There are one or two minor faults in it; a horse nearly always stoops its head as it approaches the edge of a ford, and the erectness of its bearing in the picture takes away the look of truth in the entire incident, more than one could have supposed possible. I have some doubt also,

most ardently wished and scarcely dared to hope for, and that I felt the most inexpressible delight when the extract from your letter was read to me, being at the time in a wretched state of despondency" (*Ruskin, Rossetti, Pre-Raphaelitism*, p. 138). Mr. Windus contributed to the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition in 1857; his picture, "Too Late," is noticed in the *Notes* of 1859 (p. 233). "Suddenly, owing, it is said, to a great sorrow, he left off painting, and nothing was seen of his work till, in 1896, the New English Art Club startled the picture-loving public, who had thought Windus dead, by showing three unfinished works of his on their walls" (P. H. Bate, *The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters*, p. 82). See also *Magazine of Art* for December 1899, where an account of the painter's life and work is given. The picture of "Burd Helen" was purchased by Mr. Miller, of Liverpool; at his sale, two years later, it fetched 200 guineas; in 1892 it appeared again in the sale-rooms and fetched a high price: see Harry Quilter's *Preferences in Art*, p. 72.]

Digitized by Google

whether, unless the spectator were himself supposed to be wading the ford, so as to bring the eye almost on a level with the water surface, the reflection of the sky could so entirely prevent the appearance of the pebbles through the water. They are rightly shown through the dark reflection at the horse's foot, and rightly effaced, in a great degree, by that of the sky; but I think they should not have been entirely so. These are, however, quite minor defects, and I merely name them lest they should be brought forward by adverse critics as if they were serious ones.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

III

NOTES

ON SOME OF

THE PRINCIPAL PICTURES

EXHIBITED IN THE ROOMS OF THE

ROYAL ACADEMY

AND THE

SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS,

ETC.

No. III.—1857.

BY JOHN RUSKIN, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS," "STONES OF VENICE," "SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE," ETC., ETC.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 65, CORNHILL.
1857.

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of the third number of *Academy Notes* there were two editions:—

First Edition (1857).—The title-page was as shown on the preceding page. An octavo pamphlet of 60 pages. Half-title with the words "(*Price One Shilling*)" below, and with imprint on the reverse—"London: Printed by Spottiswoode & Co. New Street Square," pp. 1, 2; title-page (with blank reverse), pp. 3, 4; text, pp. 5–60, the imprint being repeated at the foot of p. 60. No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. Inserted at the end are 16 pages of advertisements of books published by Smith, Elder & Co. Issued on May 16 in green paper wrappers, with the title-page (enclosed in a plain double-ruled frame) on the front; the words "Price One Shilling" being added below the rule at the foot. On p. 4 of the cover are advertisements of "Mr. Ruskin's Works on Art."

Second Edition (1857).—The words "Second Edition" were added to the title-page and wrapper, and the words "(*Price One Shilling*)" removed from the half-title; otherwise an exact reprint of the First.

Reprinted in 1902 in *Ruskin on Pictures*, vol. ii. pp. 75–121.

Reviewed in the *Economist*, June 13, 1857 (see below, p. 147) and the *Art Journal*, June 1857, N.S., vol. 3, p. 200.]

Digitized by Google

EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY

As year by year, in the Royal Academy, the principles established by the Pre-Raphaelites are more frankly accepted, and more patiently put in practice, I observe that, notwithstanding all the substantial advantage derived from them, two results must necessarily follow, involving some disappointment to the public and great mortification to the artist. I see that we shall have more wayside nooks, corners of green fields, pools of watercress streams, and the like, than can, in the aggregate, contribute much to the amusement of the restless and over-excited crowd of London spectators; and I see also that there will be so high an average of perseverance and care brought to bear on every subject, that both will pass unnoticed unless recommended by more brilliant qualities; and painters who flattered themselves that the devotion of a year's honest labour could not but make their pictures conspicuous, and their names illustrious, will find, with bitter disappointment, that patience and sincerity are no longer distinctive, and that industry will soon be less notable than sloth.

Respecting the approach of these inevitable calamities, it is only to be answered, to the complaint of the public, that we ought no more to weary of green lanes in Trafalgar Square[1] than we do in Devonshire or Kent; and, to the disappointment of the artist, that although distinction cannot be, and should not be, conferred by the practice of any

[1] [The reader will remember that the Royal Academy of Arts was at this time housed in a portion of the present National Gallery: see above, p. 21 *n*. Its exhibitions were transferred to Burlington House in 1869.]

Digitized by Google

particular style, honesty of aim will always make his labour useful and his life happy. Distinction, if it is justly won, can of course be won only by superior intellect; a change in the methods or objects of a school does not raise the capacities of the scholars to one level, nor render it more possible than it has been hitherto to be illustrious in large companies. But it ought to be a sufficient reward for much painstaking, if the art we practise guides us into continually greater sense of natural beauty, though that beauty may be manifested to others as well as to us; and enables us to gain an honourable livelihood, though one wholly independent of laurel crowns.

The steady advance of just principles of painting is, however, strangely complicated in the present Exhibition with examples of error or of backsliding. The Pre-Raphaelite cause has been doubly betrayed by the mistimed deliberation of one of its leaders and the inefficient haste of another; and we have to regret at once that the pictures of Holman Hunt were too late for the Exhibition, and that those of Everett Millais were in time for it.

We will, as before, glance round the rooms in the order of the catalogue, sometimes breaking the line to go in quest of such pictures as it may be desirable to compare at once with that under consideration.

8. Au Sixième. (*J. C. Horsley, A.*)

A sweet sketch; we can hardly, in the present stage of general completion, call it more; and I regret this, for the subject is one which would have borne exquisite finish. The *innocent* life of the French grisette, if we may suppose the "Rigolette" of Eugène Sue[1] to be a type of a large class, is one of the pleasantest to contemplate among all the conditions of labour which are dependent on modern

[1] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 372 *n.*), where Ruskin makes some remarks on the character of Rigolette in the *Mystères de Paris*, and notices her love of flowers.]

Digitized by Google

European luxury. Surely, by the way, there should have been flowers at her window, as well as that piece of extravagance on the table, into which she has been beguiled at the Marché aux Fleurs. The outlook of the window also, being "au sixième," might have been made very interesting; views over Parisian roofs are nearly always so.

14. Narcissus. (*W. E. Frost, A.*)

The young Dryad on the right gives us an interesting example of ideal grace of action in "finding" a daffodil. The bough which she raises with her pretty arm has evidently been so extremely in her way, that the only wonder is how, under the oppressive circumstances, she ever found the daffodil at all. Dryads and Naiads are, I suppose, susceptible of shadows only from themselves; as I see the trees cast none upon them. Mr. Frost knows best; but if it be so, Dryads and Naiads are bad models, and mortal ladies, liable to chiaroscuro, would make better pictures.

28. A Crab and Lobster Shore. (*E. W. Cooke, A.*)

This very careful study just misses being quite right and quite beautiful for want of a very slight degree of greater watchfulness—*not* greater labour. Merely by way of an instance of the kind of completion wanted, note the shadow of the man most to the right, leaning on the boat. It is a dark-brown shadow on a violet boat; in the probability of which, at that distance, I do not believe, but let that pass. This dark-brown shadow falls not only on the violet-coloured wood, but on a stripe of red paint and on some seams of paler colour. But it crosses all of them, remaining equally dark-brown. Now, a shadow which was rich brown on violet, would be orange-scarlet on crimson, and deep golden-grey on white; and all these changes ought to have been shown in that shadow by separate touches of pure colour. It is an infinitely more important matter that

Digitized by Google

these transitions of hue should be given, than that mere force of chiaroscuro should be reached. A similar though less demonstrable monotony in hue causes all the careful work on the shore to look coarse. Each pebble is painted with two or three touches of some unvaried colour—usually about two for its bright and one for its dark side; whereas each side would, in Nature, have been infinitely varied with hues either broken into texture or melting into gradation. No touch of colour is or ever can be right, however small, if it be monotonous; and almost the first point of art with a great workman is getting the colour to palpitate within the touches, mingling it with endless cunning, and never leaving one spot bare, or one hue definable.

39. A Syrian Sheikh, Egypt. (*J. F. Lewis.*)

When Mr. Lewis sends a picture to the Academy, it ought not to be one which even his truest admirers might easily pass without noticing. I have seen many of his sketches, executed in about three or four hours, which were more interesting than this highly-wrought painting, and I am quite sure that he could paint a noble picture, rich in composition, and powerful in rendering of human character, in a couple of months, if he did not wilfully set himself subjects involving minuteness as a chief part of their expression. He has much of the power of Veronese and Tintoret; and yet he takes Van Eyck for his model. Why not, if only by way of practice, paint two bold pictures in the beginning of the year, one for the Water-Colour Society and one for the Academy, and then devote the long days to whatever finishing procedure he chose on his pet pictures? —these last coming forth, in due or undue time, as it might be; but two vigorous works being, without fail, produced annually. Many reasons occur to me which might be urged in further recommendation of such a plan; one or two I will state presently, with reference to Mr. Lewis's drawing in the Water-Colour Exhibition.

Digitized by Google

41. INTERIOR OF DUOMO, MILAN. (*D. Roberts, R.A.*)

It must be, I think, nearly ten years, if not more, since Mr. Roberts painted so careful a picture. It is entirely true to the scene, and unusually forcible and solemn in the effect of the painted window. But why does Mr. Roberts *always* draw painted windows lighter at the top than the bottom? I have often seen them lighter at the bottom than the top; certainly I never saw them, as in No. 418,[1] darker at the bottom than the stone of their jambs; the whole breadth of casement telling as a gloom instead of a light. The tapestry about the pillars in this Milan is thoroughly painted, and the whole picture very enjoyable, as an expression of cathedral splendour, though not of cathedral solemnity.

50. NEWS FROM HOME.[2] (*J. E. Millais, A.*)

We will pass this for the present; merely asking, as we pass, whether Mr. Millais supposes this to be the generally bright aspect of a Highlander on a campaign? or whether he imagines that Highlanders at the Crimea had dress portmanteaus as well as knapsacks, and always put on new uniforms to read letters from home in?

78. PETER THE GREAT.[3] (*D. Maclise, R.A.*)

This is a less exaggerated and more conscientious work than Mr. Maclise has yet produced. But I hope his conscience will become keener yet; for it is difficult to understand how a painter who goes through so much hard work can persist in the idea that there is no indistinctness in

[1] ["Interior of the Church of St. Gommaire, at Lierre, in Brabant."]
[2] [This picture, of a Highlander sitting in a trench during the Crimean War, reading a letter, is now in America.]
[3] ["Peter the Great, Czar of Muscovy, working as a shipwright, with his 'rough retinue,' in the dockyard at Deptford, during the winter of 1697–1698, is visited by William the Third."]

Digitized by Google

Nature, or that there ought to be none. I have heard it said that Mr. Maclise is singularly far-sighted, and draws more decisively than other painters, in the belief that he sees more clearly. But though his sight had the range of the eagle's and clearness of the lynx's; though it were as manifold as a dragon-fly's and as manageable as a chamæleon's, there is a limit to his sight, as to all our sights. He may perhaps be able to see that in Mr. Inchbold's "Jungfrau" (at the top of the room, No. 360) the foreground is covered with gentians and Alpine roses; but he cannot count the leaves of the roses, nor the filaments of the moss which embroiders the ground with gold between the gentians' blue. And, as far as in his pictures I am able to compare his power of sight with that of other people, he appears to see, not more, but a great deal less, than the world in general. When we commonplace people look from Deptford to the other side of the Thames, we do not see houses like these behind Peter the Great, with blank square patches of grey for their doors and windows. That appearance is precisely the one presented to us by the models of houses which children buy to give their dolls dinner in. But when we look at real houses across the Thames, we see panes in the windows (or rags in them, as the case may be); bricks in the walls (or holes in them); planks in the doors; tiles on the roofs; incidents of all kinds, in form and colour, infinitely rich and abundant: more or less confused, indeed; but this confusion is not with us, the unfortunate plurality, peculiar to distant objects. All natural objects are confused to us, however near, however distant, because all are infinite. Nay, I cannot but think that if even Mr. Maclise looks at a fly upon a wall ten yards from him, he may see clearly that it is a fly, but he will not be able to count the meshes in its wings; and if he looks fairly, and without any previous prejudice, at a girl's hair, however close to him, and however carefully curled, he will find that it verily does not look like a piece of wood carved into scrolls, and French-polished afterwards,

Digitized by Google

as the curls of these observant young English ladies do. The stars, I think, are adverse at present to the painting of hair, and all the immortality that our pretty ladies can hope for in that respect must be Berenice's or Belinda's;[1] for if Mr. Maclise thinks that hair is made of brown wood, the Pre-Raphaelites are all under the strongest conviction that it is made of red sand, and pass great part of their time in endeavours to enter Michael Scott's service, and make, if not ropes, at least locks, out of sea sand.[2] It is not often that I plead for any imitation of the work of bygone days; but, very seriously, I think no pupil should be allowed to pass the examination ordeal of our schools of painting until he had copied, in a satisfactory manner, a lock of hair by Correggio. Once let him do that with any tolerable success, and he would know to the end of his life both what the word "painting" meant, and with what flowing light and golden honour the Maker of the human form has crowned its power and veiled its tenderness.

103. SACRED SONG. (*S. A. Hart, R.A.*[3])

This is a good study—better in many respects than Mr. Hart's larger pictures; but these sacred singers are not Dryads, are they? or has Mr. Hart a special theory concerning shadows,—to wit, that fingers may cast them on paper, but leaves cannot cast them on foreheads?

[1] [See *The Rape of the Lock* (canto v.), where Pope converts to the purloined lock of his own heroine the legend of the apotheosis of the hair which Berenice had suspended in the temple of the war-god, as a vow to secure the safe return and victory of her husband, Ptolemy III.:—

"A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair."]

[2] [Among the exploits attributed to Michael Scott, the wizard, was "taming an indefatigable demon by employing him in the hopeless and endless task of making ropes out of sea sand."—Sir Walter Scott's Notes to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*]

[3] [Solomon Alexander Hart (1806–1881) was elected A.R.A. in 1836, R.A. in 1840. He was Professor of Painting at the Academy 1854–1863, and afterwards Librarian. One of his earlier pictures is in the Tate Gallery (No. 424).]

Digitized by Google

107. Titian preparing for his first Essay in Colouring. (*W. Dyce, R.A.*)

Well done! Mr. Dyce, and many times well done! though it is of little use for any of us to say so to you; for when a man has gone through such a piece of work as this he knows he is right, and knows it so calmly that it does not matter much to him whether people see it or not. This is a notable picture in several ways, being, in the first place, the only one quite up to the high-water mark of Pre-Raphaelitism in the exhibition this year: for, although Mr. Carrick's (No. 135) is in several respects better painted, there are no difficulties of form and distance presented by his subject; while Mr. Dyce has encountered all discoverable difficulties at once, and chosen a subject involving an amount of toil only endurable by the boundless love and patience which are the first among the Pre-Raphaelite characteristics.

In the second place, this is the first picture yet produced by the school in which the work has been at all affected by a sculpturesque sense of grace in form. Hitherto, every master who has ranked himself on this side, has been a colourist, and his subject has been chosen and treated with chief reference to colour, not intentionally, but because a colourist can do no otherwise; seeing, in all that he has to show, effects of light and hue first, and form secondarily. I cannot tell how far Mr. Dyce is capable of becoming a colourist, but he is not one yet; and although this deficiency is grievously hurtful to his work in many respects, in one it has advantaged it: he has rendered more of the finished grace and lovely composition of line in that oak foliage than has yet been seen in oak. If he could have coloured it better, he would have softened its edges, and carried the eye more to gleams of green and shades of purple, slightly losing the lines of leaf and branch; for art always loses something, or else we should not know it from reality, and it is interesting to see, for the first time, in

Digitized by Google

the annals of the rising school, this inevitable loss taking place in colour instead of form, and the landscape painted with a sculptor's precision and a sculptor's love of grace.

Though, however, we may contentedly part with a little green and purple in oak leaves for the sake of exquisiteness in delineation, we cannot part so lightly with the blood of Titian: no boy could ever have coloured a Madonna's face who had so little colour in his own. And there was not the least need for this failure; because, though I do not think Mr. Dyce will ever himself colour like a Venetian, I see, by the way he has painted the flowers and the boy's dress, that he has quite as much eye for colour as ever Leonardo had; and he may paint flesh quite as well as Leonardo, if he likes.

Only one cavil more. Whatever Ridolfi may say[1] (I have not had time to look), Titian's actual first attempts must have been of a very different kind, and in another order of landscape. It was not in the green, delicate-leaved twilight of a lowland garden, nor among its sweet measurements of level grass, that the boy received his first impressions of colour, but among the strong trunks and rugged ground of the forests of Cadore, and in the dawns beyond its desolate mountains, when the massy clouds stood quiet between the burning and the blue. Nor would it have been a statue such as this which first made him dream of the Madonna; but rather some fresco of a wayside chapel, where she stood with her hands folded, and the moon under her feet, and the companies of heaven around her, crown above crown, circlet beyond circlet—gleaming golden in the arched shade.

Conceding, however, Mr. Dyce's theory of the place, and accepting, with perhaps a little further demur, the graceful and undisturbed dress of the boy for such as the young

[1] ["Ridolfi states that Titian, when a little boy, gave the earliest indication of his future eminence as a colourist by drawing a Madonna, which he coloured with the juice of flowers."—Note to the picture in the *Academy Catalogue*. The reference is to the life of Titian in Carlo Ridolfi's *Le Maraviglie dell' Arte:* "ancor piccioletto col solo impulso della natura, fece co' sughi di fiori, entro ad un capitello sopra ad una strada della sua patria, la figure della Vergine."]

Digitized by Google

Titian was likely to have worn to work in (particularly if the work began with flower-hunting), we may proceed to enjoy the picture heartily in all other respects—the expression of the boy being excellent, and the flowers, grass, leafage, and dress, down to the minutest fold of the purple lining of the cap, painted so that no one need ever hope to do much better.

It will take about an hour to see this picture properly.

135. THOUGHTS OF THE FUTURE. (*R. Carrick.*)

Quite faultless, as far as I can see; and one of the best, if not absolutely the best, examples of *balanced* completion which the school has produced. It is intensely difficult to put such finish into the stripes of pillow and pattern of counterpane, and yet not to let one thread become falsely conspicuous.

It is not, of course, a work involving high powers of invention, and therefore it does not yet place its painter in the highest rank of artists; but as far as it reaches it is right: and I say little of it, only because the subject is simple and the success absolute. It is a picture of which explanation is needless, and criticism impossible.

136. THE MOUNTAIN PATH. (*J. T. Linnell.*[1])

Singularly luminous and full of air. Mr. Linnell seems to be making the most rapid advances, and has good cause to be happy in the general appreciation of his work; for I notice that almost every person who looks at this picture enjoys or praises it.

138. THE YOUNG BROTHER. (*W. Mulready, R.A.*[2])

Without exception, the least interesting piece of good painting I have ever seen in my life. I call it a "piece of

[1] [Son of J. Linnell.]

[2] [For Ruskin's other references to Mulready (1786–1863) see Vol. IV. p. 336 and *n*. The picture noticed above was painted for the gallery of pictures presented

Digitized by Google

painting," not a "picture," because the artist's mind has been evidently fixed throughout on his modes of work, not on his subject—if subject it can be called. Is it not sorrowful to see all this labour and artistical knowledge appointed, by a command issued from the grave, to paint—and employed for a couple of years in painting—for the perpetual possession and contemplation of the English people, the ill-laced bodice of an untidy girl? Yet the picture will be a valuable one; perhaps the most forcible illustration ever given of the frivolous application of great powers. For this is not, observe, the commonplace littleness of an inferior mind, nor commonplace wantonness of a great one. We have had examples enough of mean subjects chosen by the trifling, and slight subjects chosen by the feeble: nor is it a new thing to see great intellects overthrown by impetuosity, or wasted in indolence; stumbling and lost among the dark mountains, or lying helpless by the wayside, listless or desolate. All this we have seen often; but never, I think, till now, patience disappointed of her hope, and conscientiousness mistaken in her aim; labour beguiled of her reward, and discretion warped in her choice. We have not known until now that the greatest gifts might be wasted by prudence, and the greatest errors committed by precision.

For it is quite curious how, throughout this composition, the artist seems to have aimed at showing the uselessness of all kinds of good. There is an exquisite richness of decoration in the pattern of the yellow dress, yet the picture is none the richer for it; an exquisite play of colour in the flesh, yet the girl is none the fairer for it: her dress is loose, without grace; and her beauty hidden, without decency. The colour of the whole is pure, but it does not refresh; its arrangement subtle, but it does not entertain: the child laughs without gaiety; and the youth reclines without repose.

to the nation by Mr. Vernon, in pursuance of his will. It has now been removed from the National Gallery to Dublin. It depicts a boy in arms crouching on his sister's neck, to escape the fingers of his brother, who playfully offers to pinch his ear.]

Digitized by Google

We may be sure, however—which is some comfort—that failure of this total kind *cannot* take place unless there is somewhere a wilful departure from truth; for truth, however ill-chosen, is never *wholly* uninteresting. For instance, here, the sense of country life is destroyed by the false forms of the trees, which are only green horizontal flakes of colour, not foliage; and the dead blue dress of the youth, though it seems at first well painted, is shaded either with pure dark blue, dirty green, or violet, wholly at random, and of course, therefore, with destruction of brilliancy as well as of relief; while the folds of the girl's gown, though they at first look well drawn, are mere angular masses, without either flow or fall.

160. A Signal on the Horizon. (*J. C. Hook, A.*)

It seems to me that this is the sweetest and most pathetic picture of an English boy that has been painted in modern times; and as for the thought, and choice of scene, and rendering of expression throughout the picture, they are all so true, so touching, and so lovely, that I do not choose to speak many words about them, lest I should do the reader harm instead of good by some discordant expression: it would need a little finished idyl of Tennyson to express them lightly. But when you have made out all this design at your leisure, go at once to the "Ship Boy's Letter" (545); for the whole heart of rural England is in that, as of sailor England in the other. Take care to read the direction of the envelope on the ground with the Dover postmark—

"William Dibble . . . Ongar Hatch, Surrey;"

and what is legible of the beginning of the letter—

"Off Cape town.
"My dear Father and Mother . . . thank God. . . dear sister."

Digitized by Google

188. At Berncastel on the Moselle. (*G. C. Stanfield.*[1])

There are more signs of present progress and future power in this painting than in any I have yet seen by the younger Stanfield; it looks like an attentively rendered portrait of the place. The hilly ground in the distance is peculiarly well drawn (and was peculiarly difficult to draw); and the shadow of the cross on the ground is followed with care among the stones, instead of being laid in with random dashes to show cleverness of touch. The place was worth drawing too. That must be an interesting example of cross, with the sculptured Madonna at the foot of it. But Mr. Stanfield must either draw his figures better or worse; he must either make them agreeable, or leave them slight. The oxen and their driver on the left, and the figure with the basket, sitting at the foot of the cross, are precisely types of the worst kind of figure which it is possible to introduce in landscape—definitely ill-drawn, and pertinaciously repulsive.

[1] [George Clarkson Stanfield, son of William Clarkson Stanfield, was born in 1828, and died in 1878. Favourable references to earlier works by the painter are made in the following letter from Ruskin to the elder Stanfield :—

"Herne Hill, Dulwich.
"18 *April*, 1853.

"Dear Mr. Stanfield,—My friend Mr. McCracken is very anxious to know if any of the pictures in this next Exhibition were intended for him? I presume not, but thought you would pardon my troubling you by the inquiry, more especially as I wished also to congratulate you on the great progress made by your son in his campaign in Italy. It seems to me quite a campaign on Marengo, and I am sure you must be very proud of him. I felt inclined to quarrel with him in defence of the honour of Mont Blanc, but he has certainly painted it on the spot, or he would not have made it look so low. It is a good fault—most people exaggerating it.

"Believe me, always faithfully yours,
"J. Ruskin."

For McCracken, see Vol. IV. p. 38 *n.*, Vol. XII. p. xlvii. The pictures referred to in this letter do not seem to have been exhibited. For Ruskin's description of the Alps seen from Marengo, see his poem in Vol. II. p. 232.]

Digitized by Google

201. A Swiss Meadow in June. (*H. Moore.*[1])

I cannot judge of this study, it gives me too much pleasure; but it seems to me *very* perfect in general harmony of light, and in the sweet motion of the clouds along the horizon. People are beginning, I see, to feel Switzerland truly at last; and how more may sometimes be done by a single blue mound of pines, like that on the right of this field, than by piled pyramids of rock and snow.

204. Port na Spania, near the Giant's Causeway, Co. Antrim. (*C. Stanfield, R.A.*)

I am very glad to see Mr. Stanfield's work in this exhibition on a little smaller scale than of late years, and proportionally more careful. This is a most interesting picture, and quite notable for its new conditions of cloud. Usually Mr. Stanfield gives us only solid rolling clouds behind his hills; I do not recollect his ever before painting their floating films in front of the crags, whose geology, by the way, seems rendered with the greatest care: and beautifully picturesque geology it is; the horizontal beds of the red and black lavas opposing the pillared precipice at the summit. Two points only seem to me to be regretted; the first, that the turf, half-way up the hillside, looks like a bank close to the spectator, the overhanging edges having the aspect of one thickness of turf only, though the little yellow and black figures below show us that these turf edges are at least from twelve to twenty feet high. The second, that the ship does not look as if she struck with any force or weight. I cannot get rid of the idea that she is a small model, and, moreover, a small

[1] [Henry Moore (1831–1895) did not exhibit any important seascape till the following year. His recognition by the Academy was long delayed; it was not till 1885 that he was elected A.R.A.; R.A. in 1893. Moore, like Brett, before taking to marine subjects, painted landscapes in the Pre-Raphaelite spirit.]

Digitized by Google

model drawn with no great truth of perspective. I am certain the curves of her stern, where it rises from the deck, are false: if she is strained there, the strain should have been distinctly shown; and if not, the error in the lines of the starboard side would be demonstrable in a moment, if it were worth while to give a diagram for the purpose.

I like the black box particularly, though it does not look like one that would float. How well Mr. Stanfield could colour, if he liked, and took as much pains always as he has with this one dark square! What a gain, too, would it not be to us all, if he did take this trouble! The calm in the "Gulf of Salerno," for instance (371), would be quite a delightful picture, if only the sails had a little sun upon them. Even without sun, I wholly disbelieve in clay colour, either in sails or seamen, or in anything whatever but clay.

213. Sir Roger de Coverley in Church. (*C. R. Leslie, R.A.*)

Not attractive or interesting at first sight, it will repay an attentive study with continual increase of charm, and of wonderment. It is, of course, not well coloured; but though meagre and cold, it is not coarse; nor, in its own pale key, inharmonious; while the subtleties of expression are endlessly delightful in their delicate mystery. This light touch of Leslie's seems to me to show an immense advance in power since he gave us the somewhat laborious humour of Sancho and the Duchess.[1]

Do not miss the little girl holding up her hands in awe and delight, at the entire impropriety of behaviour on the part of the swallow, neither by servant nor knight to be touched on his wings, or impressed in his mind.

[1] [A favourite subject with Leslie. The picture in the Tate Gallery (No. 402), exhibited in 1844, is a replica of one exhibited in 1824.]

Digitized by Google

219. AUTUMN MORNING. (*T. Creswick, R.A.*)

Well worked, but too complex: the fallen trunk with its bare branches on the right, though its lines, in mere composition, are useful in repeating those of the opposite bank, breaks up the picture by their number; we did not need so many straggling arms there. Mr. Creswick is also always a little too heavily green in foliage: when trees are green at all, they are green to brighter and better purpose.

283. A DREAM OF THE PAST.[1] (*J. E. Millais, A.*)

The high praise which I felt it my duty to give to this painter's work last year[2] was warranted by my observing in it, for the first time, the entirely inventive arrangement of colour and masses, which can be achieved only by the highest intellect. I must repeat briefly here what I have had occasion hundreds of times to explain elsewhere, but never yet often enough to get it generally understood—that painters are broadly divisible into three classes:[3] first, the large class who are more or less affected or false in all their work, and whose productions, however dexterous, are of no value whatever; secondly, the literally true painters, who

[1] [Better known by the title in the catalogue, "Sir Isumbras at the Ford." An interesting account of the painting of this picture, and of its hostile reception by the critics, is given in *The Life and Letters of Millais*, vol. i. pp. 306–323, where also a reproduction of the skit by Fred. Sandys is given. Millais, Rossetti, and Holman Hunt are represented crossing the ford on a braying ass, which is labelled "J. R., Oxon"—entitled "A Nightmare." The satirical verses below Sandys's print are said to be taken from the "Metrical Romance of the Man in Brasse and his Asse, by Thomas le Tailleur." Millais both resented Ruskin's criticism and took it to heart. "Ruskin said it was not a failure but a fiasco," said Millais once; "so I kicked it over in a passion. The hole is there now" (*Millais and his Works*, by M. H. Spielmann, p. 96). He proceeded, however, when the picture was returned unsold from the Academy, to repaint the horse entirely. The picture was bought in the following year by the painter's friend, Charles Reade. It next belonged to Mr. John Graham, and on his death Mr. R. H. Benson bought it. In 1892, at Mr. Benson's suggestion, Millais again repainted some portions of the horse, and added the trappings. The reproduction here given is of the picture in its present state.]

[2] ["Titian himself could hardly head him now," p. 56, above.]

[3] [The nearest approach to an explicit classification of painters into (1) false, (2) true, and (3) inventive may now be read in the additional passage from the MS. of *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii., which is printed in Vol. XI. pp. xvii.–xxi. But the division of painters into these classes is, as Ruskin says, implied "hundreds of times" in his previous works. See, for instance, Vol. III. p. 165, and Vol. X. p. 217 *seq.*]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

J.E. Millais R.A. Allen & Co. Sc.

Sir Isumbras at the Ford

From the picture in the possession of R.H. Benson, Esq.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

copy with various feeling, but unanimously honest purpose, the actualities of Nature, but can only paint them as they see them, without selection or arrangement; whose works are therefore of a moderate but sterling value, varying according to the interest of the subject; lastly, the inventive painters, who are not only true in all they do, but compose and relieve the truths they paint, so as to give to each the utmost possible value; which last class is in all ages a very small one; and it is a matter to congratulate a nation upon, when an artist rises in the midst of it who gives any promise of belonging to this great Imaginative group of Masters.

And this promise was very visible in the works of Millais last year; a new power of conception being proved in them —to instance two things among many—by the arrangement of the myrtle branches in the "Peace," and the play of the colours in the heap of "Autumn Leaves." There was a slovenliness and imperfection in many portions, however, which I did not speak of, because I thought them accidental —consequent, probably, on too exulting a trial of his new powers, and likely to disappear as he became accustomed to them. But, as it is possible to stoop to victory, it is also possible to climb to defeat; and I see with consternation that it was not the Parnassian rock which Mr. Millais was ascending, but the Tarpeian. The change in his manner, from the years of "Ophelia" and "Mariana" to 1857, is not merely Fall—it is Catastrophe; not merely a loss of power, but a reversal of principle: his excellence has been effaced, "as a man wipeth a dish—wiping it, and turning it upside down."[1] There may still be in him power of repentance, but I cannot tell: for those who have never known the right way, its narrow wicket-gate stands always on the latch; but for him who, having known it, has wandered thus insolently, the by-ways to the prison-house are short, and the voices of recall are few.

I have not patience much to examine into the meaning

[1] [2 Kings xxi. 13.]

Digitized by Google

of the picture under consideration. If it has one, it should not have been disguised by the legend associated with it, which, by the way, does not exist in the Romance from which it professes to be quoted, and is now pretty generally understood to be only a clever mystification by one of the artist's friends, written chiefly with the view of guarding the awkward horse against criticism. I am not sure whether the bitterest enemies of Pre-Raphaelitism have yet accused it of expecting to cover its errors by describing them in bad English.[1]

Putting the legend, however, out of question, the fancy of the picture is pretty, and might have been sublime, but that it is too ill painted to be dwelt upon. The primal error in pictorial grammar, of painting figures in twilight as bright as yellow and vermilion can make them, while the towers and hills, far above and far more exposed to light, are yet dark and blue, could hardly have been redeemed by any subsequent harmonies of tone, much less by random brilliancy; and the mistake of painting the water brighter than the sky which it reflects, though constant among inferior painters in subordinate parts of their work, is a singularly disgraceful one for a painter of standing.

These, and the other errors or shortcomings in the work, too visible to need proving, and too many to bear numbering, are all the less excusable because the thought of the picture was a noble one, and might seem both justly to claim, and tenderly to encourage, the utmost skill and patience in its rendering. It does not matter whether we

[1] [The lines written for the picture by Tom Taylor began thus :—

"The goode hors that the knyghte bestrode,
I trow his backe it was full brode,
And wighte and warie still he rode,
Noght reckinge of rivere;
He was so mickle and so stronge,
And thereto so wonderlich longe,
In lande was none his peer.
N'as hors but by him seemed smalle.
The knyghte him ycleped Launcival,
But lords at borde and grooms in stalle
Ycleped him Graund Destrere."

They were described as being "from the Metrical Romance of Sir Ysumbras."

Digitized by Google

take it as a fact or as a type: whether we look verily upon an old knight riding home in the summer twilight, with the dust of his weary day's journey on his golden armour, taking the woodman's children across the river with him, holding the girl so tenderly that she does not so much as feel the grasp of the gauntlets, but holds the horse's mane as well, lest she should fall; or whether we receive it as a type of noble human life, tried in all war, and aged in all counsel and wisdom, finding its crowning work at last to be bearing the children of poverty in its arms, and that the best use of its panoply of battle is to be clasped by the feeble fingers, wearied with gathering the sheddings of the autumnal woods. It might bear a deeper meaning even than this: it might be an image less of life than of the great Christian Angel of Death, who gives the eternal nobleness to small and great, and clasps the mean and the mighty with his golden armour—Death, bearing the two children with him across the calm river, whither they know not; one questioning the strange blue eyes which she sees fixed on heaven, the other only resting from his labour, and feeling no more his burden. All this, and much more than this—for the picture might be otherwise suggestive to us in a thousand ways—it would have brought home at once to the heart of every spectator, had the idea but been realized with any steadiness of purpose or veracity of detail. As it stands, it can only be considered as a rough sketch of a great subject, injudiciously exposed to general criticism, and needing both modification in its arrangement and devoted labour in its future realization.

I am sorrowfully doubtful, however, how far Mr. Millais may yet be capable of such labour. There are two signs conspicuous in his this year's work, of augury strangely sinister: the first, an irregularity in the conception of facts, quite unprecedented in any work that I know in the Realistic schools of any age; the second, a warped feeling in the selection of facts, peculiar, as far as I know, to Millais from his earliest youth.

Digitized by Google

I say, first, an irregularity of conception. Thus, it seems only to have struck the painter suddenly, as he was finishing the knight's armour, that it ought to be more or less reflective; and he gives only one reflection in it—of the crimson cloth of the saddle, that one reflection being violently exaggerated: for though, from a golden surface, it would have been, as he has rendered it, warmer than the crimson, no reflection is ever *brighter* than the thing reflected. But all the rest of the armour is wholly untouched by the colour of the children's dresses, or of their glowing faces, or of the river or sky. And if Mr. Millais meant it to be old armour, rough with wear, it ought to have been deadened and darkened in colour, hacked with edges of weapons, stained with stains of death; if he meant it merely to be dusty, the dust should have lain white on some of the ridges, been clearly absent from others, and should have been dark where it was wet by the splashing of the horse. The ripple of the water against the horse itself, however, being unnoticed, it is little wonder if the dash of the chance spray is missed. A more manifest sign still of this irregular appliance of mind is in the fact that the peacock's plume, the bundle of wood, and the stripes of the saddle-cloth are painted with care; while the children's faces, though right in expression, are rudely sketched, with unrounded edges, half in rose colour and half in dirty brown. Vestiges of his old power of colouring, still unattainable by any other man, exist, however, in that saddle-cloth and in the peacock's feather. But the second sign, the warping of feeling, is a still more threatening one.

The conception of his second picture (408)[1] is an example of the darkest error in judgment—the fatalest failure in the

[1] ["The Escape of a Heretic, 1559." A scene, as described in an illustrative note in the catalogue, from the Spanish Inquisition. A Spanish lover, disguised as a monk, rescuing his mistress, who has already been robed in her fiery gaberdine for the *auto-da-fé*; in the background a monk, bound and gagged. The subject was suggested to Millais by some engravings and documents shown to him by Stirling-Maxwell (see *Life and Letters of Millais*, i. 319). The picture is now in the possession of Sir W. Houldsworth, M.P.]

Digitized by Google

instinct of the painter's mind. At once coarse and ghastly in fancy, exaggerated and obscure in action, the work seems to have been wrought with the resolute purpose of confirming all that the bitterest adversaries of the school have delighted to allege against it; and whatever friendship has murmured, or enmity proclaimed, of its wilful preference of ugliness to beauty, is now sealed into everlasting acceptance. It is not merely in manifest things, like the selection of such a model as this for the type of the foot of a Spanish lady, or the monstrous protrusion of the lover's lip in his intense appeal for silence; but the dwelling perpetually upon the harshest lines of form, and most painful conditions of expression, both in human feature and in natural objects, which long ago, when they appeared in Millais's picture of the "Carpenter's Shop,"[1] restrained the advance of Pre-Raphaelitism; and would arrest its advance now, unless there were other painters to support its cause, who will disengage it from unnaturalness of error, and vindicate it from confusion of contempt.

For Mr. Millais there is no hope but in a return to quiet perfectness of work. I cannot bring myself to believe that powers were given to him only to be wasted, which are so great, even in their aberration, that no pictures in the Academy are so interesting as these, or can be for a moment compared with them for occasional excellence and marvellousness of execution. Yet it seems to be within the purpose of Providence sometimes to bestow great powers only that we may be humiliated by their failure, or appalled by their annihilation; and sometimes to strengthen the hills with iron, only that they may attract the thunderbolt. A time is probably fixed in every man's career, when his own choice determines the relation of his endowments with his destiny; and the time has come when this painter must choose, and choose finally, whether the eminence he cannot abdicate is to make him conspicuous in honour, or in ruin.

[1] [In the Academy of 1850: see Vol. XII. p. 320.]

Digitized by Google

355. Bon Jour, Messieurs. (*F. Stone, A.*[1])

Thank you, Frank; very heartily thank you. There has not been a greater benefit, in way of pictures, bestowed on us this year. It is good for us, after walking, as walk we must so often, up and down the grey streets of London, watching the gay carriages with the sorrowful faces in them, and the fading beauties, and wasting pleasures, and yet more wasting toils, to remember that within a bird's flight of us, along the top of Calais cliffs, the fisher's cart-horse trots to market through the morning air; that the idle fisher-boy tosses his limbs behind for gladness; and that fisher-girls are laughing, with a bird's song in every laugh;—crowned with sacredness of happy life, and strength of careless peace, and helpful innocence.

442. Morning after a Heavy Gale. (*E. W. Cooke, A.*)

Very awful, after we have looked at it a little while; at least that bronze vessel is so to me—a ship that is not, and yet is—the true spectre ship, whose sight is destruction; nor less so the skeleton of the boat with the wild waves sifting through the bones of her, and the single figure waiting on the desolate ship's deck, and saved by its faithfulness. Was Mr. Cooke indeed a little inspired by Turner's great "Shipwreck,"[2] or is the partial resemblance of arrangement, in the position of the larger boat and wreck, accidental? I wish he would try to beat Turner in one thing, in which not only Turner, but all marine painters whatever, to this day, are conquerable enough by a little pains —sea *foam;*[3] namely, When shall we have foam as well as waves? It *can* be drawn, not quite rightly, but far

[1] [Frank Stone (*b.* 1800), father of Mr. Marcus Stone, R.A., was elected A.R.A. in 1851. He died suddenly from heart disease two years after this picture was exhibited.]

[2] [No. 476 in the National Gallery: see Vol. XIII. p. 107.]

[3] [Compare Vol. XIII. pp. 110, 162.]

Digitized by Google

better than ever hitherto; and the first painter who succeeds with it, provided he is at all a good artist in other respects, and has not merely found out a trick of foam, will make all bygone sea pieces look like the worn-out canvas waves of a theatre.

501. MONTAIGNE.[1] (*H. Wallis.*)

Not, I think, quite so successful as the "Chatterton" of last year; but it contends with greater difficulties, and is full of marvellous painting. It is terribly hurt by its frame, and by the surrounding colours and lights; seen through the hand, the effect is almost like reality. That is a beautifully characteristic fragment of homely French architecture seen through the window.

I should think this picture required long looking at, and that it is seen to greater disadvantage by careless passers-by than almost any of its neighbours.

542. RYDAL. (*J. M. Carrick.*)

This is the most important of the various studies from Nature, all more or less successful, which surround us in the Academy this year. I am heartily sorry to pass them by, *en masse*, especially as most of them, such as 214, 215, 268, 1136,[2] and others, are incomparably more elaborate and valuable than anything of the kind I have to notice in the water-colour exhibitions; only the water-colour draughtsmen have more power in educating public taste, partly from reputation and partly from the pleasantness of water-colour as a decoration of rooms; so that I can give no more time to these oil studies, various and beautiful as they are. This large one is most reverent in its fidelity to the reflections

[1] ["Montaigne: the library, from studies made at Montaigne's château in Gascony."]

[2] [214. "A Quiet Nook" (A. J. Stark). 215. "Craig-dulyn, Carnarvonshire" (J. W. Oakes; see p. 143 *n.*). 268. "A Stream from the Hills" (B. Leader, now R.A.). 1136. "Russ, in the Dargle, co. Wicklow" (T. F. Collier).]

Digitized by Google

of the quiet lake, most skilful in its rendering of the dim light on the distant hills. I never have seen retiring distance, in light of this kind, so well rendered. The stream has been studied with equal care; but it is impossible to paint clear running water ripple by ripple: some conventionality of freedom must be allowed always.

556. THE GOING DOWN TO NAZARETH. (*W. C. T. Dobson.*)

Very tender in expression, but commonplace; and in general idea more or less false or improbable. Mr. Dobson must see to it, or he will be cast away on the rock of Purism; he is already, both in this picture and the "Reading the Psalms" (No. 63), more infected than he was last year by the great Purist theory of the sanctity of clay colour.[1] Now it is precisely clay and its colour which are the least sacred things in the world: because all heavenly effort or action whatever is a conquest of the clay—from the first conquest of it by the breath of life to the last conquest of it by the baptism with fire; and in the least things, as in the greatest, it is fire and its colour which are sacred—not dust. These imperfect religious painters, headed and misguided by Ary Scheffer, are all just like Naaman: they think they cannot worship rightly unless there "be given unto thy servant two mules' burden of earth."[2]

562. WAITING FOR THE VERDICT. (*A. Solomon.*)

Very full of power; but rather a subject for engraving than painting. It is too painful to be invested with the charm of colour.[3]

[1] [See above, 1856, 532.]

[2] [2 Kings v. 17. For another reference to Ary Scheffer, see below, p. 180. Compare also, for a summary of Ruskin's views on the sanctity of colour, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. xi.]

[3] [This picture was exhibited in the following year at Liverpool, and popular feeling favoured it for the prize of the Liverpool Academy, which, however, was awarded to Millais's "Blind Girl." A letter from Ruskin on the subject is given below, p. 327.]

Digitized by Google

597. Ploughing at Seville, 1857. (*R. Ansdell.*[1])

More interesting than cattle pieces are generally; but without special merit of any kind, and quite out of its proper place. Why should work like this be on the line?—unless the pictures are treated as furniture only, and the black masses in this case set off the room: I believe there is an arbitrary rule about the size of animals, which allows those drawn to a diminished scale to be on the line, but mercilessly raises those which, like Landseer's (77),[2] are of life size; I believe all such rules to be very harmful. Good work should be put near us, whatever its scale; and we ought to be able at our ease to study the wonderful execution of the fur in Landseer's large grey mountain hare, and to see, without a telescope, that there *is* a hare in Mr. Oakes's exquisite Welsh foreground (596).[3] How foolish we shall think ourselves, when once we get rooms where we can put our year's pictures every one in a good place, for ever having done painters all this injustice, and brought upon ourselves all this discomfort, merely for want of a furlong or two more of wall, and waste ground!

602. Autumn Flowers. (*Miss A. F. Mutrie.*)

This lady's work is always beautiful; but there is some incongruity between the luxuriant evidence of education in the group of central flowers and the roughness of the ferny bank they rest upon. All true lovers of art, or of flowers, would rejoice in seeing a bank of blossoms fairly painted; but it must be a bank with its *own* blossoms, not an unexpected picnic of polite flowers in the country. Neither need the sky be subdued in colour. I believe the

[1] [Richard Ansdell (1815–1885), animal painter, first exhibited 1840. He collaborated at various times with Creswick, J. Phillip, and W. P. Frith. Elected A.R.A. 1861, R.A. 1870.]

[2] ["Scene in Braemar—Highland Deer," etc.]

[3] ["Caernarvonshire Hills, from Anglesea."]

Digitized by Google

most beautiful position in which flowers can possibly be seen is precisely their most natural one—low flowers relieved by grass or moss, and tree blossoms relieved against the sky. How it happens that no flower-painter has yet been moved to draw a cluster of boughs of peach blossom, or cherry blossom, or apple blossom just as they grow, with the deep blue sky between every bud and petal, is more than I can understand; except that I know, in art, the likeliest and properest thing for everybody to do is almost always the last that will be done.

614. Adopting a Child. (*F. B. Barwell.*)

A well-considered and expressive picture; somewhat hurt by the unmanageable phenomena of modern life, in dress and book-cases; which are the more to be regretted, because the arrangement of purple and green in the mother's shawl shows that Mr. Barwell could produce majestic pieces of colour with other materials. It tells its story plainly enough; but if the spectator passes hastily, he might, nevertheless, miss the indication of the reason for the adoption, in the portrait of their own lost child, which hangs behind the parents; and to which the girl, shrinking from them to her mother's side, evidently bears a close resemblance.

994. "When the Leaves begin to Turn." (*A. W. Hunt.*)

Consummate in easy execution and blended colour; there is nothing else like it this year. The subject is ill chosen, being confused in mass and incapable of effective treatment; but, taken merely as a study, birch foliage and mossy stones *cannot* be done better. I do not know what kind of feelings the inferior painters of such subjects have whose works, by chance or right, are on the line this year in the principal rooms; but I think that if I had painted some of those well-shown foregrounds, I would rather have dashed my

Digitized by Google

hand through my picture at once, than have left it in a good place while such a work as this was on the ground. No. 761,[1] by the same hand, is a very remarkable drawing, and the best study of sky that I can find this year; notable especially for its expression of the *consumption* of the clouds —not their driving away, but melting away in the warmer air. A third work, 566, apparently the most important of the three, is hung out of sight.

The writer of the judicious and interesting criticism which has this year given so beneficial a direction to the authority of the *Times*, in matters of art, has anticipated nearly all I had to say on the subject of Portraiture,* except in one particular. Some expressions in the paper of Wednesday last, respecting the tiresomeness of *conventional* backgrounds, might be construed by a hasty reader into general blame of *distinctness* or completion in backgrounds; and this was not, I believe, what the writer meant—certainly

* My notes on the pictures of Millais might also have been shortened if I could have anticipated the careful analysis given in the *Times;* but as they were in corrected type before the appearance of the Wednesday's paper, I left them as they were written, the coincidence in the points chosen for animadversion being confirmatory of the justice of the independent criticisms.[2]

---

[1] [761. "Snowdon after an April Hailstorm." 566. "Time and Tide."]

[2] [The *Times* of May 13, 1857, contained a Third Notice of the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. A considerable portion of this was devoted to a criticism of "Sir Ysumbras at the Ford" and the "Escape of a Heretic." On the subject of portraiture, the writer praised a portrait by Sir J. W. Gordon for its absence of "the stereotyped superfluities of background—no red curtain, no column, no inkstand, no dashing landscape. How those accepted portrait backgrounds pall upon one! How many a tolerably painted head becomes intolerable by their intrusion." The following letter from Millais to his wife refers to the criticisms in question: "Doubtless you have seen the *Times* and its criticism. When I heard it was written in the same spirit as usual I did not read it. I therefore only know of its import through my friends. The general feeling is that it is not of the slightest importance. Criticism has been so tampered with that what is said carries little or no weight. Ruskin, I hear, has a pamphlet in the press which takes a *pitying* tone at my failure. The wickedness and envy at the bottom of all this are so apparent to me that I disregard all the reviews (I have not read *one*); but I shall certainly have this kind of treatment all my life. The public crowd round my pictures more than ever, and this, I think, must be the main cause of animosity. . . . I should tell you that although my friend Tom Taylor is said to have written the first two reviews in the *Times*, this last is not attributed to him."—*Life and Letters of Millais*, i. 323.]

Digitized by Google

not what he ought to have meant. The accessories of a portrait should be completely painted, both for the sake of their artistical use and explanatory power. Distinctness and force of collateral masses are of the greatest use in relieving the more delicate gradations of colour in a well-painted face; and the greatest portrait-painters, Titian, Veronese, Velasquez, and Raphael, introduce the most trenchant, clear, and complete backgrounds. Indeed, the first three so rejoiced in quantity of accessories that, when engaged on important portraits, they would paint large historical pictures merely by way of illustration or introduction. The priceless Veronese, which I rejoice to hear has been just secured for the nation, the "Triumph of Alexander," was painted only to introduce portraits of the Pisani,[1] and chiefly to set off, to the best advantage, the face of one fair girl. Generally speaking, if a painter is great, he will find his background serviceable in proportion to its space; and although, in modern portraiture, splendour of background is rarely possible or suitable, its *definiteness* should always be insisted upon; not only because it tends to make the manner of the work better throughout, but because accessories, rightly designed, are explanatory of character; and we like, or ought to like, better to see a man in whom we are interested sitting in his favourite room and accustomed chair than isolated among the sullen fogs or idle fancies of idealism.

I cannot speak of Architecture, as it would need the dwelling at length on almost inexplicable details; but I take leave to wish the good people of Halifax joy of their Town-hall (1073), that is to be, I hope, pleading only with Mr. Scott[2] for a little interference of some sort with the lines of quatrefoils in its roof (1067); and I ought not to speak of Sculpture, because I have little pleasure in it when unconnected with architecture: so that I only go into the

[1] [No. 294 in the National Gallery. For other references to the purchase of it, see Vol. XIII. pp. 38, 244, 287, 552.]

[2] [Sir George Gilbert Scott, R.A. (1811–1878), the eminent architect. For various references to him by Ruskin, see General Index.]

Digitized by Google

sculpture-room to look at my friends' works—such as Mr. A. Munro's[1] bust of Dr. Acland (1280), which I hope I am not wrong in thinking beautiful; or Mr. Woolner's[2] medallion of Carlyle (1368), which I know I am not wrong in thinking like. It is much to be regretted that Mr. Woolner's highly-wrought bust of Tennyson was not sent here instead of to Manchester,[3] as we might then have compared in it, and in Mr. W. Brodie's (1354), two conceptions of the noble head, each containing elements which are wanting in the other.

But what a dark sign it is of the state of our architectural schools that there should never be seen in this room one example of sculpture applicable to external decoration, or subordinated to an architectural use![4]

[1] [Alexander Munro (1825–1871), the son of a stone-mason, came to London in 1848, and was employed for some time on the stone carving for the new Houses of Parliament. He was intimate with Rossetti, and references to him are frequent in the memoirs of the Pre-Raphaelite circle. He did some carvings for the Oxford Museum, and made a medallion of Woodward, the architect: see Introduction to Vol. XVI. Rossetti introduced Munro to Ruskin, who became a friend, and was godfather to one of his sons. Munro took a modelling class at the Working Men's College. On March 19, 1858, Madox Brown, in recording a lecture by Ruskin at the Working Men's College, says: "Ruskin as eloquent as ever, and as widely popular with the men. He flattered Rossetti hugely, and spoke of Munro, in conjunction with Baron Marochetti, as the two noble sculptors of England whom all the aristocracy patronized."—Rossetti's *Letters to William Allingham*, p. 90. For another reference to Munro, see *Two Paths*, § 163 *n.*]

[2] [Thomas Woolner (1825–1892), sculptor and poet, was one of the original Pre-Raphaelite Brethren, to whose journal, the *Germ*, he contributed two cantos of the poem, "My Beautiful Lady." Discouraged by the ill-success of his idealistic sculpture, Woolner sailed for Melbourne in 1852 to try his fortunes in the goldfields; his departure inspired Madox Brown's picture "The Last of England." He returned in 1854; and the works referred to above were the turning-point in his career. He was elected A.R.A. in 1871, R.A. in 1874. Woolner's bust of Tennyson is now in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge: a replica of it, by Woolner himself, is in the Abbey near the poet's grave. In the *Memoir* of Tennyson by his son (vol. i. p. 431), there is the following note from the poet's diary, November 1858: "I have just seen Ruskin. He says that the signor's (G. F. Watts') portrait of me is the grandest thing he has seen in that line; but so he said of Woolner's bust." The present Lord Tennyson states that the only other bust from life of his father was made also by Woolner in 1873 (*ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 431).]

[3] [*i.e.*, to the Art Treasures Exhibition in that year.]

[4] [The importance of associating architecture and sculpture, now better recognised in this country, was a favourite theme with Ruskin. See, *e.g.*, *Seven Lamps*, ch. iv.; *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 61; and *Two Paths*, Lecture iv.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS

THERE is a general character manifested in the pretty and richly-decorated room of this Society, which appears to me deserving of some serious consideration before we take note of any of the drawings separately.

Here are three hundred and four drawings by forty-seven * painters, many of them elaborately finished, all showing that the artists have given their complete energy to them; and among the three hundred and four there is not *one* which expresses, or summons, a serious thought. There are, indeed, a few love passages; but they reach no further than an anxious look, or a joyful hesitation. There are the children in the wood, shown by gaslight in the middle of moonlight; and there is a tearful pilgrim, with a superb scallop, and a staff which it is to be hoped, as he is an old man, that during most of his pilgrimage somebody else has carried for him. There is an angel under great difficulties in appearing to the shepherds, in consequence of their unanimously refusing to look at him; and there are two pretty fancies, of a peasant's return, in summer night, to his cottage among the deep corn, and a fisherman's, in stormy summer dawn, to his cottage on the shore. I think these are all that are so much as intended to be pathetic or suggestive.

Now there must be, of course, a certain proper and healthy demand in London, every spring, for pictures which mean nothing, just as there is for strawberries and asparagus.

* Why I say three hundred and four instead of three hundred and seventeen will appear presently.

Digitized by Google

We do not want to be always philosophical, and may wisely ask for and enjoy a certain average number of paintings of roses and quinces, of showers and sunbeams, of beaches where we bathe, and glens where we shoot or clamber. All this is perfectly right and refreshing; nevertheless, a Society which takes upon itself, as its sole function, the supply of these mild demands of the British public, must be prepared ultimately to occupy a position much more corresponding to that of the firm of Fortnum and Mason, than to any hitherto held by a body of artists; and to find their art becoming essentially a kind of Potted Art, of an agreeable flavour, suppliable and taxable as a patented commodity, but in no wise to be thought of or criticised as *Living* Art. For living art, or art at all, properly so called, never has been, nor can be, developed in answer to a demand of this inferior kind; nor is it possible even for a simple landscape-painter to treat any of his simplest subjects worthily, unless, as he passes through the world, other things strike his eyes and fancy than the mere pleasantnesses of its outward aspect. Every form and colour bears new meaning to us as soon as we begin to understand the greater purposes of life, and to feel the interest of its events. We may stand aside from both, set no hand to any but our own quiet work, pass our days in happy ramble or rest, sketch-book in hand, among the innocent glens and by the silent shores; but if, meantime, we are incapable of such reflection as shall make us know, in the depths of those glens, and in the cry of the herd of waves about the beach, their true connection with the thoughts, and joys, and sorrows of men, we never shall paint one leaf nor foam-wreath rightly.

I said just now that the drawings in the room were three hundred and four only, because I wished to make separate reference to those of Mr. David Cox. I believe the health of this artist does not admit of his now devoting much labour to his pictures; and therefore that we ought not to class them among the other works as representative of *effort*, but rather as expressions of the feeling of a painter's

Digitized by Google

mind at rest.[1] Be this as it may, they form a complete exception to the general law of failure in sentiment, of which I have been speaking. They are deeply pathetic, and, as far as they reach, exquisitely harmonious in tone: the Caernarvon [No. 117], in its warm grey walls and dark sea, and the Bolton Abbey,* in its melancholy glow of twilight, are strangely true and deeply felt. But there is not any other landscape which comes near these works of David Cox in simplicity or seriousness.

Perhaps the Highland scene,[2] No. 11, by Richardson,[3] may be taken as giving the clearest example of this fault in the work of a very clever artist. Mr. Richardson is gradually gaining in manual power, and opposes cobalt and burnt sienna very pleasantly. But he seems always to conceive a Highland landscape only as a rich medley of the same materials—a rocky bank, blue at one place and brown at another; some contorted Scotch firs, some fern, some dogs, and some sportsmen: the whole contemplated under the cheering influence of champagne, and considered every way delightful. The Highlands *are* delightful, but, for the most part, in another way than this. I do not regret that Mr. Richardson has given this one reading of them, the reading that pleasantly occurs to an active youth in his long vacation; but there ought to be, on the walls, the other readings, too, of those desolate glens, with the dark-brown torrents surging monotonously among their lower rocks,

* No. 299. The degree of light and warmth obtained on the ruins by the use of subdued colour is by much the most instructive thing, to me, in the exhibition.

---

[1] [This criticism must have pleased the painter. "It strikes me," he wrote to his son in 1853, "that the committee think my drawings too rough. They forget that they are *the work of the mind*, which I consider very far before portraits of places." (Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, ii. 162.) For references to Ruskin's notices of Cox, see below, p. 195 *n*.]

[2] ["Scene in Glen Nevis."]

[3] [Thomas Miles Richardson (1813–1890), of Newcastle, was elected a member of the Society in 1851. He was a prolific exhibitor, a large proportion of his drawings being of Scottish subjects. The Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum has several examples.]

Digitized by Google

cutting them into the cup-like pools where the deep stream eddies like black oil, and the moth, fallen weary out of the wind on its surface, circles round and round, struggling vainly; of the little spaces under the fern where the glen widens, and the sward is smooth as if for knights' lists, and sweet as if for dancing of fairies' feet, and lonely as if it grew over an enchanted grave; of those low alder thickets, set in soft shade where the stream is broad by the stepping-stones—the drowned lamb lying on the bank, under their stooping leaves, since the last flood; of those sweet winding paths through the oat-fields, and under the ash-trees, where the air breathes so softly when the berries are blush-scarlet in the setting sun, and more softly still when the cold, clear, northern light dies over the purple ranges jagged and wild. Are not these seen everywhere? and seen day by day, and yet never thought upon; felt, I believe, more at his heart by the half-starved shepherd boy than by the skilfullest of our painters. And I am the more sorry that Mr. Richardson does not yet feel the expression in Highland scenery, because I think there may be traced considerable power of composition in the passages of these distant hills; and the large piece of rock on the left is very nearly well drawn: in fact, the old established system of taking out triangles of light and laying on sharp edges of darkness has been nearly perfected by Mr. Richardson, and does so much more in his hands than most other people's, that if he ever determines to draw in a pure and right way, I should think he would reach far. He seems to have a good eye for colour—there is a very pretty piece of speckled grey in the square rock on the right at the bottom—but he is not at the slightest trouble to fit the colours of shadows to the lights, or of dark sides to light sides; and his ungrammatical brilliancy will therefore always look only like what it is—very pretty warm colour, but never like sunshine. It is worth while to stand midway between the screens on this side of the room, and look alternately from this drawing to Mr. Fripp's (37), which is very true in

Digitized by Google

relations of sun and shadow colour. Mr. Richardson's will perhaps, even after many glances, be thought the prettier drawing; but only in Mr. Fripp's will be seen the Highland sun and air.

And Mr. Richardson is the less to be excused for not entering completely into Highland character, because he can enter into no other. He has fallen so passively into the habit of drawing rocks in sharp angles, and a wild litter of fern and grass among them, that he can compose a landscape of no other materials; and we find "Catanzaro, the capital of Calabria" (94), looking like a number of models of Italian buildings, erected by some imaginative Highland proprietor in Ross-shire.

18. CORNFIELD, NEAR HASTINGS. (*C. Davidson.*[1])

Very true and modest; as are all Mr. Davidson's works. His companion picture (89, "Haymaking, Lewes") gives me a great desire to go haymaking in Sussex this summer. What a lovely field that must be!

37. SCENE AT THE HEAD OF GLENCOE. (*G. Fripp.*[2])

This drawing has just missed being an exceedingly fine one: the glow of red light on the hills on the right is perfectly imagined; the slightest more gradation in it, and a purer touch or two at the brightest part, would have brought it into great beauty. The cows are individually stiff, but excellently put in place. The whole is full of genuine work, and real look of Highlands.

[1] [For an earlier reference to Mr. Charles Davidson, see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (note added in the 5th ed., 1851), Vol. III. p. 599.]

[2] ["Scene at the Head of Glencoe, taken from the road before descending the Pass." George Arthur Fripp (*b.* 1813), of Bristol, was an exhibitor from 1841. An oil picture by him of Mont Blanc from Courmayeur (in the Liverpool Gallery) is said to have elicited praise from Turner. He afterwards devoted himself only to water-colours. Scotland was one of his favourite sketching-grounds, and he visited Balmoral by command to make drawings for Queen Victoria. Examples of his work may be seen at the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

Digitized by Google

126. "On the Derwent (near the entrance to Borrowdale: evening)" is also very warm with sweet sunshine; but Mr. Fripp lets his colours get awkwardly entangled at the edges among his distant hills. He ought to use them much more neatly, and keep them purer, and draw more carefully. His *aim* in drawing is very right indeed; the rock structure in those Glencoe masses being quite true, only messed a little in the working.

45. Val St. Nicolas. (*J. D. Harding.*)

I am glad to see the works of this master again in this room; but they do not look quite so distinct from the rest as they used to be: they are, if I mistake not, looser and flatter in touch than in old times. This is a clever drawing; but Mr. Harding need not hope to draw Switzerland on these cheap terms. The flanks of the Alps are by no means films of blue colour, but very substantial and sturdy masses of chestnuts and walnuts, of cornfields and vineyards, of black pines and green meadows; all positively declaring themselves for pines, walnuts, corn, and grass, and requiring as such to be drawn; on peril, otherwise, of instant loss both of character in the nearer scene, and of height in the peaks beyond. If you hide the upper range of mountains in this drawing with your hand, you will find the lower one forms a very satisfactory distance: as such, the superimposed hills merely dwarf and encumber *it;* while, had it been drawn with its true detail, it would, on the contrary, have exalted *them.*

57. Glenarm, County Antrim. (*H. Gastineau.*[1])

There is a great deal of daylight and air in this picture; and Mr. Gastineau's work is taking at present rather a

[1] [Henry Gastineau (1790–1876) lived to be the oldest member of the Society, to which he was admitted as an Associate in 1821. He worked much for the engravers, and was also for many years engaged in teaching. The South Kensington Museum

Digitized by Google

peculiar position on the walls, as almost alone representative of the old pure water-colour painting, executed without much subsequent sponging for texture, or body-colour washes and dashes. This drawing, as well as the more vigorous "St. Maurice" [No. 106], is very pure in execution, and has in consequence a pleasant unaffected character not otherwise attainable.

61. SUNSET. WINTER: A BLACK FROST. (*C. Branwhite.*[1])

This painter has, for some time back, shown considerable ability; but he must not hope to reach any sterling qualities without much closer study of Nature. It is really high time, considering how many treatises are written on perspective and optics, that our painters should understand, once for all, the difference between shadows and reflections; and that as some five or six hundred pictures of pretension are painted annually with reflection of sun or moon in water, it should be generally understood that the reflection of the sun does not radiate, any more than that of a white ball or a white wafer radiates; but that it is either a circle (in *absolutely* calm water), an oval, more or less elongated (in partly disturbed water), or, under certain circumstances, especially when the sun is low, a vertical pillar, more or less broken; each of these images spreading in flakes to right and left when there is much agitation in the water, but always rather narrowing than widening to the spectator's feet.[2]

has some of his drawings. Ruskin, as appears from an entry in his diary, had some acquaintance with the painter, who lived at Camberwell (compare Vol. XIII. p. 504) :—

> "*March* 9, 1844.— . . . Went down to call on Gastineau; showed me Turner's Deluge—a plate now not to be had—glorious—must try to get it. Couldn't praise his own much, which bothered me, but he seems a nice modest person, and bore my coolness well—told me much about clouds, which he has studied thoroughly, though to little purpose."]

[1] [Charles Branwhite (1817-1880) was elected an Associate of the Old Water-Colour Society in 1849. For some account of him, see the *History* of that Society, vol. ii. p. 336. He was a pupil of W. J. Müller.]

[2] [On the subject of reflections in water, see below, p. 474.]

Digitized by Google

64. One of Nature's Ferneries, Guernsey. (*P. J. Naftel.*)

It looks like a true portrait of a beautiful spot, almost tropical or antediluvian in its ferny richness; and both this and Mr. Naftel's other drawings seem wrought with a real love of Nature, and a pleasant sense of daylight colour, without any affectation or desire to attract attention by trickeries. But I think Mr. Naftel has yet to do some massy and stern work in light and shade, and to discipline himself in point-drawing, before he will be able to express himself as he would like to do, and may do.

The two subjects, 64 and 96 ["The Brook in Spring, Guernsey"], are exquisitely pretty; but I believe it will be generally found that no *merely* pretty place is fit for pictorial treatment. Into all good subjects for painters' work, either human feeling must enter by some evidence of cultivation, or presence of dwelling-place, or of ruin; or else there must be some sublime features indicative of the distress as well as the beauty of Nature. I think this law admits of no exception, but I have not space here to explain or apply it.[1]

130. Faust's First Sight of Margaret. (*F. W. Burton.*[2])

I am at a loss to know why this picture is in a central position; it possesses no special merit of any kind. The

[1] [On "the essential connection of the power of landscape with human emotion," see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. i. ("The Dark Mirror"), §§ 8, 9.]

[2] [Sir Frederic William Burton (1816–1890), Director of the National Gallery (1874–1894), elected Associate of the Royal Hibernian Academy, 1837, enjoyed a large practice in Dublin as a portrait-painter. Member of the Old Water-Colour Society, 1856; his drawings a feature of its exhibitions till 1870. His well-known portrait (in chalk) of George Eliot is in the National Portrait Gallery. One of his subject-drawings is in the Dublin National Gallery. For a reference by Ruskin to Burton's management of the National Gallery, see *The Laws of Fésole*, ch. iv. § 16 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

face of Margaret is pretty, but wholly untouched by the feeling which prompts her first sharp answer: "I am neither a lady, nor pretty, and can go home by myself."[1] For the rest, it is simply a stage dress and a stage stride; and the colouring is more false and crude than that of almost any picture in the room. The red of the cloak, for instance, is daubed about at random, coming bright in the shadow or dirty in the light, as chance will have it. I entirely dislike Faust,[2] and am sick of illustrations of it; but I wonder whether any painter will ever do it so much justice as to represent Mephistopheles with the face of a man who could either tempt or deceive.

211, 222. Welsh Bridge and Torrent [Valley of the Lledr]. (*G. Dodgson.*[3])

I like Mr. Dodgson's sketches (they hardly claim to be more) better than *any* landscape work here, David Cox's only excepted. There is very great perception of colour in them, and evidently entire fidelity to his subject. The stream in 222 is the only genuine piece of torrent-drawing in the exhibition. All the rest are done by recipe, so much scratch and so much dash; this is a hard and steady try at a real stream in flood. Mr. Dodgson's fern-drawing, too, is much more subtle than any one else's; his ferns are not merely green central rods, with so many green arms on each side, but real, crisped, quaint, varied leaves, with personal character in them. Still his work only reaches a certain length, and he seems quite careless in choice of subject. I hope he will some day choose more scrupulously, and finish more carefully.

[1] ["Bin weder Fräulein, weder schön,
Kann ungeleitet nach Hause gehn."]

[2] [See Vol. V. p. 330 *n.*]

[3] [George Haydock Dodgson (1811–1880) had been apprenticed to George Stephenson, the railway engineer, but afterwards gave up surveying for water-colour painting. An accident in early life caused his hand to be affected with a nervous tremor—a fact which naturally affected his manipulation (J. L. Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, vol. ii. p. 307).]

Digitized by Google

217. At the Fountain. 244. Village Musicians, Brittany. (*F. W. Topham.*[1])

The delicate feeling and expression in these two drawings induce me to hope that Mr. Topham may produce works of sterling quality if he continue to aim at points of character. As paintings, both are somewhat thin and incomplete, being too much wrought with broad flat washes; very good things for grounds, but wholly incapable of producing any right result without severe drawing above them. The girl's head in 217 is, however, very pretty, and satisfactorily finished.

302. Hareem Life, Constantinople.[2] (*J. F. Lewis.*)

Though this drawing represents but a small portion of the year's labour of the master (it being only through untoward chance that it has no companion), it may give rise to some serious question how far the conscientiousness of completion ought to be allowed to extend. I know well that Lewis could not have satisfied himself with less than the exquisite accomplishment of every detail which he has given us here; nay, I know that he is not satisfied even with what he has given, and would forbid me that word "accomplishment," if he saw it being written. But it seems to me questionable how far he ought to consult his own satisfaction; still more questionable whether so much invention, toil, intensity of observation and of mechanical skill, should be trusted to one poor little piece of white linen film, fifteen inches square. If water-colour were infusible enamel, if the ground were a thick plate of beaten

[1] [Francis William Topham (1808–1877), engraver and water-colour painter, father of F. W. W. Topham. His works consist of figure-subjects obtained in Ireland, Scotland, France, Spain, and Italy. Specimens may be seen in the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

[2] [This drawing was bought at the time by the collector of Turner's works, Mr. Windus (for whom, see Vol. III. p. 234 *n.*). It changed hands in 1859 (255 guineas).]

Digitized by Google

gold, if the English public were ready to receive a noble picture as a rich treasure, and take the charge of it as a weighty trust, we might reasonably ask Mr. Lewis to finish his work with his full strength, and make it right, at any cost. But now, when the mildew of winter and sunshine of summer, the city's smoke and country's frost, are alike sure to do fatal work, within a very short series of years, on the plurality of works executed in these delicate materials, and either exposed to the dusty honours of modern exhibitions, or condemned to the humid seclusion of the drawing-room when the family are "out of town," it seems to me mere waste of intellect to bestow so much labour on a single drawing. Surely the chances of safety, such as they are, might be multiplied; and six or seven drawings of less elaborate but equally admirable execution might at once educate the public eye by their diffusion, and fall, perhaps, one or two out of the six, into the possession of persons who would seriously value and safely guard them. No one is less disposed than I to advocate any loose or sketchy methods of painting; but there is a firm, adequate, and manly execution, such as that adopted by the Venetian painters when they were in a hurry, which, while expressing a perfect conception of the finished object, and reaching as deep and substantial colour as more elaborate work, yet attains its ends at once with a magician's speed and a wise steward's economy. The practice of such modes of expression has great tendency to enlarge the range of thought, and give majesty to its tones: for there is something elevating in the very habit of scorning our own work; and, frequently, grander things were done by Titian or Giorgione when they were filling a spare panel in a corner of a refectory, or colouring, half in play, the bit of plaster left between two ugly window-sills of a friend's house, than when they were bringing all their science and skill to bear on some beloved design in their painting-rooms.

And there is this further advantage about a rough piece of work, that time, or chance injury, cannot so grievously

Digitized by Google

affect it as they can a more delicate one. Nothing is so painful as to see what has once been exquisitely complete, become spotted, or scratched, or faded. But a rough chalk sketch, or a bold and massively cast fresco, will bear many a stain and scar, and fail in many a flake of colour, without materially losing its power over our minds. If the slightest spot or injury touched the trellis-work and drapery in Lewis's pictures, no one would ever be able to look at them again till they had been "restored"; and still less, after such restoration, any one who knew the master's work.

In the case of Lewis there is this further reason for pleading for quicker work, that his invention and power over character are more distinctive even than his subtle execution.[1] Van Eyck realized pure detail quite up to the mark of this picture, and in passages needing air tone, or transparency of darkness, considerably further; but Van Eyck could not arrange masses of drapery as these are arranged, still less could he have given all her tigerish strength and cruel waywardness to the couchant cat, or laid in the same grace of languid opalescence the filaments of the peacock's plume. But all this might have been done, and done quite as greatly, in three days instead of three months; and perhaps a higher kind of excellence generally reached by the master, if he thought now more of arrangement and character than of absolute finish. He can never, after bringing himself up to this perfectness, paint carelessly or slightly; but there *is* a chance of his losing the great harmonies of his compositions, and even some of his power over the expression of human features, if he spends too much time on golden fringes and wall mosaics.

I believe the face of the principal figure in this picture is unfinished; at all events, I am quite sure the master will see cause for altering it after his eye has been turned for a

[1] [See above, p. 94, where Ruskin complains that Lewis took Van Eyck for his model, "though he has much of the power of Veronese and Tintoret."]

Digitized by Google

little while to other subjects. Both the faces are too grey, and this one is somewhat wanting in retiring shadow, and in distinctness of the sides, so that it looks flat. The cat is wholly magnificent in action, but not quite furry or silky enough in her coat. She looks as if she had put pomade on her fur.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS[1]

THERE is more sincerity of aim, now, in this body of artists than in the elder Society; though a sincerity which shows itself chiefly in the way which is least interesting—in mere studies and sketches from Nature, not in landscape design nor in figure pieces, so that it is impossible to take note of all the simple though meritorious drawings which have been produced by them this year without wearying the reader by mere repetitions of quiet praise. I can only allow myself the pleasure of referring to one or two principal or characteristic works. I will not go formally round the room, but name them as I remember them.

152. AT PALLANZA: HAZY MORNING. (*T. L. Rowbotham.*[2])

Without bringing forward this drawing as in any wise an example of great art, it yet possesses one character

[1] [The New Society of Painters in Water-Colours was formed in 1831, and reconstructed in 1834. From 1838 onwards the Society was housed at No. 38 Pall Mall, next door to the British Institution. In 1859 it built itself a new Gallery there. In 1863 the Society changed its title to The Institute of Painters in Water-Colours. In April 1882, after some correspondence between the two bodies, the Old Water-Colour Society declined to amalgamate with the Institute; in the following month thirteen of the principal members of the Dudley Society were elected to the Institute. In April 1883 the Institute moved from Pall Mall to its present Galleries in Piccadilly, and in 1884 it became The Royal Institute.]

[2] [Thomas Leeson Rowbotham (1823–1875) was drawing-master at the Naval School at New Cross. Two of his drawings are in the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

Digitized by Google

which distinguishes it, to my mind, very honourably from many by masters of more power or pretension. I think Mr. Rowbotham loves the Lago Maggiore, and was thinking of Lago Maggiore and not of himself all the while he was painting. If he makes the blue of the water a little too bright, or the draperies of the houses too gay, it is not so much to make his picture conspicuous, as to reach, if by any means he may, the standard of his own memories of the lovely lake and shining village. And I think this a precious character in work, while it is also a rarer one than we imagine; for it is quite possible to be much more faithful to natural detail than Mr. Rowbotham is, and yet to be faithful only in pride, for the sake of showing how accurate we can be; and then the accuracy, somehow or another, always becomes of no use. It is also quite possible to paint on better principles than Mr. Rowbotham does, and yet to care for nothing but principles all the while; whereas I see plainly that this artist does at heart care chiefly for the misty mountains and the deep lake, and is trying to make us care for them too. Which I think, also, he succeeds in doing very sufficiently. This is very like Pallanza, though it is not everybody who will believe that it is; but Italian lakes are indeed as blue, Italian towers in morning sunshine as white, as these; and when I said just now the blue was too bright, I did not mean it was too pure, but that it was not dark enough. Another time, if Mr. Rowbotham will carry his pier a little deeper down into the water, and show the stones more darkly beneath the increasing blue, he will find the effect is truer; though very good even now. Note the two floating bits of wood at the shallow edge, and the three ranges of the shore-cast weed and shingle—not tide-marks, but evidences that the south-west wind blew warm with rain on the St. Gothard a few days ago, raising the lake's level with soft melting of snow, from which level it has ebbed a little since in these sunny mornings.

Mr. Rowbotham would do well, however, to study the

Digitized by Google

laws of reflection in coloured water more than he has hitherto. They are very curious and subtle; and it is quite absurd not to ascertain them, for he has nothing to do but to dissolve a little Prussian blue in water in a white basin, and set a few rose leaves, and tulip leaves, and sticks floating in it, and he may study every change in hue and fantasy of reflection at his ease; afterwards applying the principles he thus ascertains to his boats, and oars, and awnings.

285. THE KABYLE MOUNTAINS AT SUNSET.[1] (*Charles Vacher.*[2])

The rocks and aloe on the left are very beautifully drawn, the tone of the distant mountains most true, and all the effects more delicately felt than hitherto in this painter's work. He bids fair to occupy a separate field in the painting of evening light (compare Nos. 15, 217,[3] etc.), corresponding closely to that which was once occupied by George Robson.[4] But Mr. Vacher should not draw figures; they will waste his time, and distract his attention from parts of his subjects in which he succeeds better.

134. THE UPPER WYE. (*Thomas Lindsay.*[5])

This I remember, because the piece of river bed is so quaintly chosen—so different from anything which sketchers usually stay at. It would be a most poetical subject if well carried out; but Mr. Lindsay's skill is not quite up to the need.

[1] [From the café above Mustapha, Algiers.]
[2] [Charles Vacher (1818–1883) was in 1846 elected a member of the New Water-Colour Society, to the exhibitions of which he was a regular contributor, his subjects being mostly from Italy, Algeria, and Egypt.]
[3] [15. "The Environs of Mesilah: First Hour of Night." 217. "The Vesper Hour, Italy."]
[4] [See Vol. III. p. 193 *n.*]
[5] [Lindsay, member of the "New" Society 1837, made a specialty of Welsh subjects. He died in 1861.]

Digitized by Google

103. TREBARWITH SANDS. (*S. Cook.*[1])

Mr. Cook has a very fine eye for colour, and great understanding of sea. I like all his drawings exceedingly. This seems on the whole the leading one, the rosy sunlight opposing the strength of the green waves very beautifully.

201. SAN CLEMENTE, VENICE. (*J. H. D'Egville.*[2])

Not a very good drawing, but it stays in my memory because it *is* like Venice; and any such likeness is the most difficult thing in the world to find, for Venice always unsettles painters' wits: no place was ever so fit to be painted truly, or so fated to be painted falsely.

190. EARLY SPRING. (*Thomas Sutcliffe.*[3])

Compare 197.[4] Both are very earnest studies; but only to be considered as such, and of too difficult subjects to be quite successful in Mr. Sutcliffe's present stage of power. When a young painter first goes to Nature, he is sure to be charmed by her intricacy in far-away places; and he sets himself to paint what he likes best, not what is best for him. The simpler his choice the better—the door of a cottage, or a rose-bush in its garden, rather than the opening of a glen, or the aisle of a forest.

[1] [Samuel Cook (1806–1859), a regular contributor to the New Water-Colour Society from 1849 to his death. A painter and glazier by trade, he devoted his leisure to sketching. An example of his work is in the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

[2] [Elected a member of the Society in 1848; died in 1880.]

[3] [Thomas Sutcliffe, still-life and landscape painter, first exhibited at the Academy in 1856; afterwards constantly exhibited at the "New" Society. He died in 1871.]

[4] [197 had no title, but these lines from Milton's *Arcades*:—

"I'll lead you where you may more near behold
What shallow-searching fame hath left untold,
Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
Have sate to wonder at, and gaze upon."]

Digitized by Google

SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS[1]

It would of course be useless to enter into separate examination of the works produced by this Society at the time when the interest of the public is concentrated on other exhibitions. I sincerely regret this, for many of the drawings which I have had occasion to notice above are entirely inferior in skill, and works of very slight interest or power, compared to the oil paintings in Suffolk Street. Still I should vainly endeavour now to attract attention to them, and can only therefore allude, gratefully for my own part, to the elaborate studies of clear streams and rocky mountains by Mr. Boddington, Mr. Pettitt, and Mr. West. The Nos. 158, 195, 223, 346, 347, 351, and 561[2] were all full of interest and high in merit; the rock-drawing peculiarly good and careful. I had not time to examine them carefully enough to justify me in assigning precedences; only I may say that I liked the last best, for its quiet colour and beautiful setting of the trees on the distant hillsides, as well as the delight evidently felt by the painter in the clearness of the water.

158. "Il Ritorno della Contadina" (*E. Eagles*) was most carefully balanced in tone, and successful in its effect of light —and pretty in thought. Two studies by Mr. Smallfield (737, "Little Peggy," and 760, "An Itinerant Shoeblack") showed very great feeling, and, I hope, promise of high power; and "A Bird's Nest," by Mr. W. Ward (76), was

[1] [The Society of British Artists, in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, was founded in 1823. It became "Royal" in 1887.]

[2] [158. "Waterfall, Romsdal, Norway" (W. West). 195. "Bettws-y-Coed" (J. P. Pettitt). 223. "Llyn Givernen" (H. J. Boddington). 346. "Near Annecy" (J. P. Pettitt). 347. "On the Conway" (W. West). 351. "The Close of an Autumnal Evening" (H. J. Boddington). 561. "Tyn-y-Cae" (W. West).]

Digitized by Google

by much the most wonderful example of Dutch sharpness and minuteness of execution that I have seen this year; only Mr. Ward must aim more at getting true relations of shade in his large masses: he loses himself in detail.

In the BRITISH INSTITUTION[1] I cannot forget the marvellous effect of light on snow, and the truthful drawing of its wreaths and icicles, in Mr. Wolf's "Covey" (255). The effect, however, was greatly dependent on distance, and could hardly be seen in the narrow room.

[1] [The British Institution for the Promotion of Fine Art was founded in 1805, and from 1806 to 1863 held yearly exhibitions. The galleries were in Pall Mall, on the site since occupied by the Marlborough Club. The Trustees of the Institution now give scholarships for the assistance of promising art students.]

Digitized by Google

FRENCH EXHIBITION[1]

I DO not like to speak much of the French Exhibition, because there are characters in the work of every nation which need to be long and specially studied before a foreigner can do justice to them; and I have not yet been able to give serious study to the French modern school.[2] Two things, however, must strike every one: the general deadness of colour, associated with softness of outline, which seem to be enforced upon their feeble painters, and delighted in by their stronger ones. I had intended to try to get at the principle of this, to consider what harm or good was in it; but I have been hindered hitherto, and see no hope of my ever getting liberty in that room to think of, or look at, anything but the six pictures of Edouard Frère. There are, I see well enough, one or two consummate pieces by other men: the "Doctor's Visit" (186),

[1] [The "French Exhibition" is an annual exhibition of works of French artists brought together at the French Gallery, 121 Pall Mall. The first exhibition was held in 1854: the Gallery was founded by the late Ernest Gambart, afterwards passing into the hands of the Messrs. Wallis.]

[2] [In his diary of 1856 Ruskin notes on a visit to France (Amiens, September 23)

> "the advance in colour and power made lately by French artists. Muller for sentiment; Couture and Deveria for colour and effect; Philippe Rousseau for animal painting, are all notable; the first three, quite beyond all our best men of the old school."

He admitted "the disciplined power and learning" of the modern French school (Vol. V. p. 331), and its "dexterity" (*Eagle's Nest*, § 89); but lamented its "ignorance of colour" (Vol. III. p. 597); it took, he said, "all the colour out of nature" and left "only the mud" (Vol. XIII. p. 371; see also Vol. IV. p. 212 *n.*). And this darkness was to him the outward sign of "unclean horror and impious melancholy" (*Eagle's Nest*, § 114). Compare *Art of England*, §§ 171, 196.

Charles Louis Muller, pupil of Gros, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, 1849; Thomas Couture (1815–1879), pupil of Delaroche, Legion of Honour, 1848; Eugène Deveria (1805–1865), pupil of Girodet; Philippe Rousseau (*d.* 1888), pupil of Gros, Legion of Honour, 1852. Rousseau is represented at the Luxembourg; Couture and Deveria, in the Louvre.]

Digitized by Google

for instance, by Emile Plassan,[1] is as perfect and finished as work or thought well can be; and Trayer's[2] "Convalescent" (155), and several other such, show, in various degrees, a peculiar ease in getting at their point, which makes our English efforts, however successful, look clumsy and forced by comparison. But I cannot tell how I am ever to say what I want to say about Frère's pictures;[3] I can find no words tender enough nor reverent enough. They have all beauty, without consciousness; dignity, without pride; lowliness, without sorrow; and religion, without fear. Severe in fidelity, yet, as if by an angel's presence, banishing all evil and pain; perfect in power, yet seeming to reach his purpose in a sweet feebleness, his hand failing him for fulness of heart; swift to seize the passing thought of a moment in a child's spirit, as a summer wind catches a dead rose-leaf before it falls, yet breathing around it the everlasting peace of heaven;—he will do more for his country if he can lead her to look where he looks, and to love as he loves, than all the proud painters who ever gave lustre to her state or endurance to her glory. What truer glory has she than in these her village children? I cannot choose among such pictures, nor reason of them, though, perhaps, the reader may be surprised at my caring so much for what seems slight in work and poor in colour. But its very poverty and slightness are, in some sort, a part of its beauty: at least, if this painting be imperfect, I have never seen perfect painting do so much; and I believe that only the man who can conceive these pictures knows how he ought to paint them. The beautiful "Student" (61) is, perhaps, the most finished, just because it is the least pathetic; the three other more important ones, the "Luncheon," the "Sempstress," and the "Prayer," are certainly three of the

[1] [Antoine Emile Plassan (*b.* 1817), genre painter, student of Meissonier, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, 1859.]

[2] [J. B. J. Trayer's work is represented in the Luxembourg.]

[3] [The six pictures by Frère, described collectively as "Scenes in Humble Life," were: 58. "The Luncheon"; 59. "The Winter's Morning"; 60. "The Prayer"; 61. "The Student"; 62. "The Sempstress"; 63. "The New Doll."]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Ed. Frère, pinxt

W. H. Simmons, Sculpt
Allen & Co. Sc

The Child's Prayer

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

most touching poems that were ever yet written, and, I believe, by far the most lovely ever yet painted, of lowly life. Who could have believed that it was possible to unite the depth of Wordsworth, the grace of Reynolds, and the holiness of Angelico?[1]

The first named of these pictures is the most wonderful; but perhaps the "Prayer" is the one which will be most easily understood, and will best teach the spectator how to enter into the character of the rest. It needs no telling of it; surely it will speak for itself:—the little bare feet kept from the stone-cold by the nightgown which the mother has folded for them, bared of their rough grey stockings, as reverently and as surely in God's presence as if the poor cottage floor were the rock of Sinai; the close cap over the sweet, pointed, playful, waving hair, which the field-winds have tossed and troubled as they do the long meadow-grass in May, and yet have not unsmoothed one wave of its silken balm, nor vexed with rude entangling one fair thread of all that her God numbers day by day; the dear, bowed, patient face, and hands folded, and the mother's love that clasps them close in a solemn awe, lest they should part or move before her Father's blessing had been given in fulness. Return to it, and still return. It should be the last picture you look at in all the year; carrying the memory of it with you far away through the silence of the thatched villages, and the voices of the blossoming fields.

[1] [For a justification of these words, see below, pp. 174, 347.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

IV

NOTES

ON SOME OF

THE PRINCIPAL PICTURES

EXHIBITED IN THE ROOMS OF THE

ROYAL ACADEMY,

THE OLD AND NEW

SOCIETIES OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS, THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, AND THE FRENCH EXHIBITION.

No. IV.—1858.

By JOHN RUSKIN, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS," "STONES OF VENICE," "SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE," "ELEMENTS OF DRAWING," ETC. ETC.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 65, CORNHILL.
1858.

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of No. IV. of the *Academy Notes* there has been only one separate edition. The title-page was as shown on the preceding page. An octavo pamphlet of 64 pages. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. 1–2; title-page (with blank reverse), pp. 3–4; preface (here pp. 147–149), pp. 5–8; text, pp. 9–64. At the foot of the last page is the imprint—"London: Printed by Smith, Elder & Co., Little Green Arbour Court, E.C." No head-lines, the pages being numbered centrally. Inserted at the end are sixteen pages of advertisements of books published by Smith, Elder & Co. Issued on May 8, in green paper wrappers; on p. 1 the title-page enclosed in a plain double-ruled frame, the words "Price One Shilling" at the foot below; on pp. 2, 3, advertisements of books published by Smith, Elder & Co.; on p. 4 advertisements of "Mr. Ruskin's Works on Art."

Reprinted (1902) in *Ruskin on Pictures*, vol. ii. pp. 123–171.

Reviewed in the *Leader*, May 22.

The pamphlet also called forth a skit in *Blackwood's Magazine* for July 1858 (vol. 84, pp. 122–126) entitled "Mr. Dusky's Opinions on Art," with the following motto from *Rejected Addresses*:—

> "I am a blessèd Glendoveer,
> 'Tis mine to speak, and yours to hear."

The skit was by Sir Edward Hamley, who republished it in 1889 in his *Shakespeare's Funeral and Other Papers*, pp. 72–86. Ruskin on being told of the skit wrote to his father:—

> "TURIN, *August* 5 [1858].— . . . As for the *Blackwood*, I am only annoyed because I think you will be a little so; for me the stimulus of a little mean abuse and rascality of that sort is at present rather good; for I have got into slightly too cool a state for writing well in. The drawing is going on very nicely; for *it* requires patience like Hunt's work; but writing sometimes requires *impatience*, and if you send me the *Blackwood* it will be just a nice little spur for me."]

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

In a temperate and candid critique which appeared last year in the *Economist*,[1] and expressed, as I have since found, the feelings of many readers respecting this publication, complaint was made of its imperfection as a record of the art of the season; and it was truly alleged that many pictures of merit were passed without notice, and many of demerit without blame. But the writer surely could not have considered what would be involved in an endeavour to give a complete account of the Exhibitions of the year. If there is any truly original power in a picture—nay, if it shows even any considerable quantity of good work and effort, it takes me at least half an hour to form judgment of it; and if it is a *great* picture, I want the half-hour twice or three times over on different days: and the time so spent is laboriously spent—in finding out as far as I can, first, what the painter is trying for, then in comparing his way of trying for it with this and the other condition of art already existing, and considering what likelihoods of success or error are involved in his present mode of work; determining not so much what the real facts are about the picture, which

[1] [*Economist*, June 13, 1857. "Mr. Ruskin's *Notes* have by this time attained a degree of popularity that renders their verdicts of extreme practical importance to all exhibitors. They are in almost as universal use as the catalogues, and to many must serve as sole guide to the excellences of the yearly Exhibitions. Such success entails great responsibility upon their author. An incomplete and careless review of the pictures is as likely to damage individual artists as an unfair one, and a more elaborate and painstaking critique has therefore become a duty, not only for the sake of the public whom it undertakes to instruct, but also for the artists whom it has the power of drawing into notice." In writing to his father from Switzerland in the following year, Ruskin again referred to this criticism:—

"Bellinzona, *June* 18 [1858].—Fine work I should have in May, instead of walks among the spring blossoms, if I did as the *Economist* would have me at the Royal Academy. Besides, one would get dull with writing so much of the same kind of thing, and then nobody would read at all."]

Digitized by Google

I can generally tell pretty soon, as how many of those facts the painter or the public ought to be told. Often a picture of merit is passed without notice, because it has heavy faults which, if I spoke of it at all, it would be necessary to point out in a way which might discourage and harm the painter more than the idea that his picture had been overlooked by chance. Often pictures of great demerit are passed silently, because there is no hope for their painters, and the kind of error they have fallen into may be pointed out quite as usefully in other cases, without multiplying offence. Sometimes I pass over names of great reputation, because my estimate of their work is in opposition so direct to the public estimate of it that such influence as I might otherwise possess would only be weakened by expressing it; and sometimes I permit myself silence about personal friends who are doing the public little harm by their pictures, and whose friendship I should be sorry to lose. But the real and chief reason for my not speaking of such and such pictures is my not having had time to look at them. This pamphlet must, if it is to be useful, be printed within seven or eight days after the opening. Two of those days are needed for press correction and binding; five remain—that is to say, three for looking and two for writing.[1] I can neither look nor write for more than eight hours a day; which, allowing an average of a quarter of an hour to each picture, enables me even to *look* at no more than a hundred out of the thousand in the Academy; and the first choice of this hundred, out of which those to be written of must be finally chosen, of course depends, in some degree, on accident: the eye is often caught by something bright or energetic, with semblances of right, and it takes a minute or two to make quite sure there is nothing in it—and many minutes in the aggregate are thus lost; or a noble and quiet picture may have got entangled in a company so contemptible that one passes it in a fit of indignation about its

[1] [See above, Introduction, p. xxii.]

Digitized by Google

neighbours. But all this is unavoidable; nor is it to be regretted. It is precisely this losing sight here and there of a really good picture which permits me to lose sight also of the bad ones, when it is desirable to do so—nobody knowing whether the picture has been disliked or overlooked. Take the pamphlet simply for what I stated it to be in the preface to the first that was issued—a circular letter to my friends about the pictures that most interest me in my first glance at the Exhibition—and it will be found serviceable; view it in any other light, and it will be wholly inefficient. Its value consists only in being trustworthy as far as it reaches; and guiding safely, though not guiding everywhere. I trust that I shall not often overlook any truly great and consummate picture; but it is better to lose sight of ten than to pass false judgment on one; and I strive so to look and so to write, that the repentances which must necessarily follow all hurried work may be of my silences only, not of my words.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY

THE Academy walls present us this year with much matter for curious speculation, or rather for careful and earnest forecasting of the probable course of our schools of art in this their transitional stage of effort. Accidentally, there are no leading pictures, and the rooms are filled with more or less successful works by the disciples of the Pre-Raphaelite school, which, as I stated five years ago it would,* has entirely prevailed against all opposition; sweeping away in its strong current many of the opposers themselves, whirling them hither and thither, for the moment, in its eddies, without giving them time to strike out; and tearing down in its victory a few useful old landmarks, which we shall have to build up again by-and-by. But the main question forced upon our thoughts this year is the result of the new modes of study on minds of average or inferior power. For what was done in the first instance by men of singular genius, under intense conditions of mental excitement, is now done, partly as a quiet duty, partly in compliance with the prevalent fashion, by men of ordinary powers in ordinary tempers—resulting, of course, not in brilliant, but only in worthy and satisfactory work; respecting which commonplace completeness there are several points of interest for our consideration. For a year or two considerable disappointment may be felt by the disciples of the new school. Conscious in themselves of an entire change in their modes,

* Edinburgh *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 136 [Vol. XII. p. 160].

Digitized by Google

of thought, and a vigorous advance in powers both of sight and execution, they will be necessarily mortified to find that the advance is unrewarded by distinction; that their pictures, which before were unnoticed in the midst of others as wrong, are now unnoticed in the midst of others as right; and that they have become no more conspicuous in reformation than they were in heresy. There is, however, this comfort for them (without counting the comfort in the mere consciousness of being right, whether noticed or not), that the kind of painting which they now practise is capable of far more extended appeal to the popular mind. The old art of trick and tradition had no language but for the connoisseur; this natural art speaks to all men: around it daily the circles of sympathy will enlarge; pictures will become gradually as necessary to domestic life as books; they will be largely bought—though little wondered at; the painter will have to content himself with being as undistinguished as an author, and must be satisfied in this unpraised usefulness.

Secondly, the pictures of the rising school will in a few years be much more interesting than they are now. In learning to work carefully from Nature, everybody has been obliged to paint what will stay to be painted; and the best of Nature will not wait. Moreover, a subject which must be returned to every day for a couple of months must necessarily be near the house door; and artists cannot always have their lodgings where they choose: many of them, unable to quit their usual residences, must paint the best thing they can find in their neighbourhood; and this best accessible bit, however good as a study—(anything will do for that)—will usually be uninteresting to the public. The evil is increased by affectations of Wordsworthian simplicity; also by a good deal of genuine simplicity; and of more or less foolish sentiment. Formerly, when people were forced to draw by rule, and were never allowed either to think or feel, we were at least untroubled by foolish thoughts and weak feelings; now, when the rage is for

Digitized by Google

sentiment, and everybody is encouraged to tell us all that is in or near their hearts, we must not be surprised to find that naïveté may sometimes be tiresome as well as formalism, and the exaggeration of sensibility as offensive as the pedantry of science. The compensation is in this case greater than the evil: we are sure that whatever thoughts or passions truly possess the painter, will be truly expressed by him; while in old times they would have been silenced or constrained. The extent of these two adverse influences, however, is curiously shown in the present Academy. Because it is necessary to paint on successive days from the same object, in order to realize it to perfection, we have hardly a single interesting sky in the whole gallery—Mr. Dillon's sunset on the Nile (273) and Mr. E. W. Cooke's at Venice (557)[1] are almost the only pictures of merit which acknowledge the existence of clouds as a matter of serious interest — and because the humblest subjects are pathetic when Pre-Raphaelitically rendered, the two pieces most representative of the school in the rooms are both of stonebreakers: one (Mr. Brett's) of a boy hard at work on his heap in the morning, and the other (Mr. Wallis's) of an old man dead on his heap at night.[2] Taking which facts in their full significance, it is pleasant to think what this new school of ours will do when it once gets fairly to work on materials worth its while. Here we have literally only experiments and early lessons: trials of strength on fragments of landscape in serene weather; quiet little mill-streams and corners of meadows, slopes of sand-hills, farmyard gates, blackberry hedges, and clumps of furze. But what shall we say when the power of painting, which makes even these so interesting, begins to exert itself, with the aid of imagination and memory, on the splendid transience of Nature, and her noblest continuance; when we have the courses of

[1] [273. "Emigrants on the Nile." 557. "Sunset on the Lagune: San Giorgio in Alga and the Euganean Hills in the distance."]

[2] [1089. "The Stonebreaker." See below, p. 171. 562. "Thou wert our Conscript." See below, p. 170.]

Digitized by Google

heaven's golden clouds instead of squares of blue through cottage casements; and the fair river mists and mountain shrouds of vapour instead of cottage smoke—pine forests as well as banks of grass, and fallen precipices instead of heaps of flints. All this is yet to come; nay, even the best of the quiet, accessible, simple gifts of Nature are yet to come. How strange that among all this painting of delicate detail there is not a true one of English spring![1]—that no Pre-Raphaelite has painted a cherry-tree in blossom, dark-white against the twilight of April; nor an almond-tree rosy on the blue sky; nor the flush of the apple-blossom, nor a blackthorn hedge, nor a wild-rose hedge; nor a bank with crown-circlets of the white nettle; nor a wood-ground of hyacinths;* no, nor even heather, and such things of which we talk continually. Nobody has ever painted heather yet, nor a rock spotted richly with mosses; nor gentians, nor Alpine roses, nor white oxalis in the woods, nor anemone nemorosa, nor even so much as the first springing leaves of any tree in their pale, dispersed, delicate sharpness of shape. Everything has to be done yet; and we must not think quite so much of ourselves till we have done it, even though we have got to be so profoundly moral that we make everybody who looks at our work the wiser for it. We must take care not always to make them sadder also. Indeed, I look with deep respect and delight on the steady purpose of doing good, which has thus in a few years changed the spirit of our pictures, and turned most of them into a sort of sermons;—only let it always be remembered that it is much easier to be didactic than to be lovely, and that it is sometimes desirable to excite the joy of the spectator as well as his indignation.

* That is to say, so as to bring out their beauty for a principal subject. Mr. Inchbold painted some wood hyacinths and gentians, but too few, and half hidden in a litter of other flowers. Mr. Oakes painted a beautiful lichened rock, but obscured with furze and rubbish—not brought out in its power. [See above, pp. 96 and 115.]

[1] [For some remarks on this criticism, see above, Introduction, p. xxiv.]

Digitized by Google

What, however, I have to say this year of particular pictures will cast itself, to my regret, a little into the form of carping; for now that nearly all are careful and well-intended, there is no possibility of praising the universal care, or describing the universal intention; while, on the other hand, there are no leading pictures of the class that silence fault-finding, but several which just miss of being leading pictures, owing to faults which it therefore becomes a duty to find. I hope it will be understood that in my statement of these blemishes, I do not in general fix upon them because the picture in question has more faults than others, but because its merits make them more to be regretted.

18. Old Holland. (*C. Stanfield, R.A.*)

Certainly there is no cause for regret here; Mr. Stanfield never painted a more delightful picture, or one showing more of his peculiar power. The fish are unusually beautiful both in line and colour.

29. The Bluidy Tryste.[1] (*J. N. Paton.*)

I regret the prevailing gloom which at present characterizes this artist's work; art may face horror, but should not dwell with it. The greatest painters habitually have chosen cheerful or serene subjects; and if Mr. Paton will paint them more frequently, he would feel the real power of a frightful one more, when there is need for him to paint it. There was, I believe, such need in the case of his other

[1] [The subject was explained in the catalogue by the following passage:—
"Alack, proude Ladie, quoth the Knycht, I spake bot in jeste; and thou hast alone the trewest lover that ever lovit woman; for never—so God me help—loved I none other but thee. And so he died. . . . Sche streikit him straught in the rath blumis, ever making him heavy dole; and alaick, quoth sche, living I livit bot for thee, and ded I will for thee die. And so she departed thence; and towards eventyde came to our Ladie's Priory, and there made sche confessioun, and was straight assoylit, and mekely receivit her Saviour. And, whenas complinis was sung, her heavy hert brast in sondir, so that al weipit to see. . . . And they layed their bodies in one graff."—*The Harte and the Hynde,* boke xii.]

Digitized by Google

picture, "In Memoriam,"[1] it having been designed at the time of the fit of miserable public weakness which had like to have checked the doing of judgment and justice on the Indian murderers;[2] but there was no need, as far as I can see, or feel, for the defilement of this sweet dell with guilt; at least, unless it had been done more solemnly. The dead body is far too well dressed; no one can be sorry that there is an end of the coxcomb; he might have been far more gallantly dressed for his tryst without being so fine. Then Nature ought to have had more observance of him—the sun ought to have fallen here and there upon his face—yes, and upon his blood; and the hue of the leafage round him should have had, it seems to me, the deep sympathy through all its innocent life which is felt in those words of Keats—

> Saying, moreover, "Isabel, my sweet,
> Red whortle-berries droop above my head,
> And a large flint stone weighs upon my feet;
> Around me beeches and high chestnuts shed
> Their leaves and prickly nuts; a sheepfold bleat
> Comes from beyond the river to my bed."[3]

Many readers thought it a mere piece of flippancy when I said, respecting Mr. Paton's beautiful picture of the "Home," that he ought to paint nothing for some time to come but apricots and peaches.[4] It was, on the contrary,

[1] [471. A scene from the Indian Mutiny—the interior of a dungeon, where captive white women and children are confined, expecting the nameless horrors of a cruel death, when they are released by the Highlanders, who burst into their prison. In the picture, as originally exhibited, the place occupied by the Highlanders was filled with Sepoys. For a criticism of this modification, and on Sir Noel Paton's work generally, see pp. 206–212 of *The English School of Painting*, by E. Chesneau, whose criticism (says Ruskin) "my pupils may accept as my own" (*Art of England*, Lecture iv.).]

[2] [The reference is to the Governor-General's Proclamation of July 1857, which gained for him the name of "Clemency Canning," and met with as much favour in some quarters as hostility in others (see Greville's *Memoirs*, 1852–1860, ii. 127). In December 1857 Sepoy rebels were blown from the guns. Ruskin in such cases favoured strong measures, as, for example, in the case of Governor Eyre: see *Time and Tide*, § 116.]

[3] [*Isabella*, xxxviii.]

[4] [See above, p. 50. Ruskin's remark there had especially enraged the critic of the *Guardian*, who wrote: "There is a lovely picture by Mr. Paton, called *Home*, which we have gazed at with heart and eyes fuller than we should care to confess, except

Digitized by Google

a quiet statement of a true necessity. Mr. Paton will not learn what is wanting to his mode of painting until he practises colour from simple objects, in the realization of which emotion can have no share. This foreground is, of course, painted with intensest care and perfect draughtsmanship; there is more natural history in it than in most others in the rooms; the little pinguicula alpina on the left, the oxalis leaves in the middle, the red ferns, and small red viper on the right, are all exquisitely articulated as far as form goes; but they are painted without enough mystery or change of colour. It will be necessary for this painter to make colour his main object for some months, and to paint the leaves thoroughly well on a large scale before he reduces them to foreground magnitude; but the way he has executed the girdles of the two figures, the piece of bank above the knight's head, and that just under his breast, between it and the bugle, proves him to be capable of all perfection.

59. Fairy Tales. (*W. C. T. Dobson.*)

It would be difficult to improve the sweet earnestness of the little face, or the conception of the whole attitude. I merely pay tribute of admiration in passing, having had my say about Mr. Dobson's colour before.[1] His larger picture, 446, is very interesting in the new conception of Ishmael—the boy, against whom was to be the hand of all men, kissing his father's hand, and receiving his blessing.[2] What a difference between this and the vile Guercino of Milan, in which Abraham scolds them out of the tent—Hagar crying because she has no chance of another "place."[3]

anonymously, in print. Mr. Ruskin has a single sentence of general praise for it, and then proceeds—'Mr. Paton has, however, a good deal yet to learn in colour . . . apricots and peaches.' If any man can go and look at Mr. Paton's picture, and then think of this sentence without a feeling of indignant contempt, all we can say is, he is very differently constituted from ourselves."]

[1] [See above, pp. 68, 114.]

[2] [Genesis xvi. 12.]

[3] [For a similar description of the Guercino in the Brera, see *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 203).]

Digitized by Google

But Mr. Dobson is, I think, wrong in his idea of Sarah. She may, indeed, for all that is recorded of her, have been a hard and commonplace woman; but there was nothing in her sending away Hagar at this time to prove that she was, and it would have been nobler to have conceived her as more sorrowful, and hesitating in her cruelty.

79. Athaliah's Dismay at the Coronation of Joash (2 Kings xi.; 2 Chron. xxii., xxiii.). (*S. A. Hart, R.A.*)

I fear I must leave this, and its correspondent picture of the "high art"[1] school, Mr. Poole's Lear (310),[2] to the admiration of the *Athenæum*,[3] which, with great felicity of expression, declares the Lear to be under a "gloating, delicious light," and the Athaliah to be "of the highest order of Jezebel beauty." Jezebel's beauty, however, needed some painting before she tried its effect when her life hung upon it, and I fear that Athaliah's beauty must have stood in need of some such help at this period of her age. Has Mr. Hart actually painted this large picture without inquiring how old the queen or her grandson were? or does he seriously mean the figure of Joash to represent a boy only seven years old, and that of the queen to represent a wicked Eastern woman of seven or eight and forty?—for Athaliah could not be less; her son was three-and-twenty when the arrows of Jehu overtook him by Ibleam,[4] seven years before. But the *Athenæum* is too severe upon Mr. Hart, in its observation that "the dull vacant face of Joab is rather a blot"; for, as Joab at this time had been dead just a hundred and forty-two years, it was likely his face would be vacant.

[1] [On this phrase, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 19 n.).]

[2] ["The Death of Cordelia: from the last Act of *King Lear*"—now in the South Kensington Museum. P. F. Poole, *b.* 1807, R.A. 1860, *d.* 1879.]

[3] [*Athenæum*, May 1, 1858. "Mr. Poole's picture is full of a sort of gloating and exquisite light, which is neither moon, star, or sun light." "Athaliah's beauty is of the finest Jezebel order."]

[4] [2 Kings ix. 27.]

Digitized by Google

101. A Kibab Shop, Scutari. (*J. F. Lewis.*)

My first impression is that this very notable picture shows the labour in it too clearly, but I cannot judge of it in haste. The animal life is nearly perfect; the kid making up its mind to butt the pigeons is especially delightful. 122, however, is a more consummate example of the painter's work; and 245, though at first it looks uninteresting, will be found very wonderful on quiet examination. His gift of grace in arrangement of line is best seen in the fall of the red drapery of No. 51.[1] But I hardly know what is the matter with me this year, for I find Mr. Paton's pictures too dramatic, and Mr. Lewis's not dramatic enough. He has thirty-one figures in all upon the walls, and all the drama to be got out of the whole number is the arrangement of a nosegay and the presentation of a cup of coffee. Perhaps those who delight in the gloomier pictures of the present exhibition may be able to excite themselves into some interest in this last event, by supposing the coffee to be poisoned.

There is, however, one point which ought specially to be noted respecting Lewis's work—it is always and wholly original. When, some time ago, I claimed him as a Pre-Raphaelite,[2] I never meant that he had been influenced in his practice by any of the other members of that school; but that he was associated with it, as ten years ago I showed that Turner was,[3] and as all true painters for ever must be, by the mere fact of their painting truth instead of formalism or idealism; while Lewis is still more closely connected with the present nominal masters of the school by his completeness of finish to the utmost corners of his

[1] [122. "An Inmate of the Hareem, Cairo." 245. "Interior of a Mosque at Cairo: Afternoon Prayer." 51. "Lilies and Roses, Constantinople." Nos. 122 and 51 were bought by Ruskin's father: see below, p. 180.]

[2] [See *Pre-Raphaelitism* (1851), § 27 (Vol. XII. p. 363).]

[3] [It was not "ten years ago," but three, that Ruskin had specifically claimed Turner as "the first and greatest of the Pre-Raphaelites": see *Lectures on Architecture and Painting* (1855), § 134 (Vol. XII. p. 159).]

Digitized by Google

canvas. But he was not led to this finishing by Hunt or Rossetti. There never, perhaps, in the history of art was work so wholly independent as Lewis's. He worked with the sternest precision twenty years ago, when Pre-Raphaelitism had never been heard of—pursued calmly the same principles, developed by himself, for himself, in the midst of all adverse influences in Rome, and through years of lonely labour in Syria. In all those years of Eastern light, he wrought with Nature only for his master: he cannot have seen so much as one good picture from the time of his leaving Rome until his return to England. And all our discoveries here, and all our talking and quarrelling about them, have been nothing to John Lewis—as they were nothing to Turner. There is not another picture in all this Academy which I believe to have been painted wholly without reference to the Pre-Raphaelite dogmas: they are either directly or distantly imitative; either cautiously recusant or vigorously defiant. But John Lewis paints as he would have painted had no such school, no such dogmas ever existed; and that girl would still have been there, and she would still have had the same exquisite glow in her face, the same delicate light in her eyes, and the same finished tracery of gold on her robe, though Pre-Raphaelitism had been strangled ten years ago in its birth, and all the painters in Europe had now been daubing like Haydon or Benjamin West.[1]

119. Sunday Evening. (*T. Webster, R.A.*[2])

Mr. Webster is quite delightful both in this picture and 334 ["Grace before Meat"]. I never remember seeing the expression of a child, at once full of affection and mischief,

[1] [For Haydon, see Vol. XII. pp. 129–130; for another reference to West (1738–1820), P.R.A., see below, p. 330, and Vol. X. p. 125, Vol. V. p. 125 *n*. Ruskin was perhaps here thinking of the description of West in Byron's *Curse of Minerva*—"Europe's worst dauber, and poor Britain's best."]

[2] [Thomas Webster (1800–1886) was constant, during a long artistic career, to the same style of domestic genre. For another reference to him, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 49). His work is well represented in the Tate Gallery and South Kensington Museum.]

Digitized by Google

so delicately and perfectly touched as in this little disturber: one sees so well that the house never can be quiet for her, except when she is asleep; and holds no other joy so dear as that disquiet.

200. THE MAID OF DERWENT. (*H. H. Emmerson.*)

A promising average example of the kind of study from Nature which fills the rooms, and of which it is impossible to mark the other instances specially. This is better balanced in effect than most, and looks as if good work would come of it.

204. THE MISSING BOAT: PAS DE CALAIS. (*Frank Stone, A.*)

Very good in much of its expression, and thoroughly careful, but too much elaborated in the studio, and not quite enough on the beach. It is got up too primly, as the principal figure is in her fishwife's dress. Sorrow, and salt water, after six hours' stand on the shingle, don't leave a woman's dress quite so tidy.

218. THE DERBY DAY.[1] (*W. P. Frith, R.A.*)

I am not sure how much power is involved in the production of such a picture as this; great ability there is assuredly—long and careful study—considerable humour—untiring industry,—all of them qualities entitled to high praise, which I doubt not they will receive from the delighted public. It is also quite proper and desirable that this English carnival should be painted; and of the entirely

[1] [Now in the Tate Gallery, No. 615. For various particulars about the picture, see E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the National Gallery* (British School). For other references to it by Ruskin, see his letter of Feb. 2, 1880, "On the Purchase of Pictures," in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, i. p. 82; and the letter of June 10, 1880, on "A Museum or Picture Gallery," in *On the Old Road*, 1885, i. § 501; both reprinted in a later volume of this edition.]

Digitized by Google

popular manner of painting, which, however, we must remember, is necessarily, because popular, stooping and restricted, I have never seen an abler example. The drawing of the distant figures seems to me especially dexterous and admirable; but it is very difficult to characterize the picture in accurate general terms. It is a kind of cross between John Leech and Wilkie, with a dash of daguerreotype here and there, and some pretty seasoning with Dickens's sentiment.

216. At a Farmhouse in Surrey. (*G. P. Boyce.*[1])

Full of truth and sweet feeling. How pleasant it is, after looking long at Mr. Frith's picture, to see how happy a little girl may be who hasn't gone to the Derby!

273. Emigrants on the Nile. (*F. Dillon.*[2])

Pelicans to wit; and many thanks to Mr. Dillon for giving us some idea of the wonderful aspect of the bird in flight: we must certainly have it carved so in a cusp or gargoyle in the Oxford Museum.[3] The transitions of glowing colour, from the nearer ground to the sunlit horizon, are far finer than anything Mr. Dillon has yet accomplished. The drawing of the palm-trees seems admirable.

284. The Nativity. (*A. Hughes.*)

Quite beautiful in thought, and indicative of greater colourist's power than anything in the rooms; there is no

[1] [George Price Boyce (1826–1897), best known as a water-colour painter, originally studied architecture, but a meeting with David Cox at Bettws-y-Coed in 1849 determined him to the choice of painting. He was an intimate friend of Rossetti; and though not a member of the P.R.B., the movement had much of his sympathy (see a passing reference to his work in the *Notes on Prout*, below, p. 434). He was for many years one of the principal members of the Old Water-Colour Society.]

[2] [Frank Dillon (*b.* 1823), landscape painter; member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours.]

[3] [The Oxford Museum was at this time being built by the architects Woodward and Deane. Ruskin, who had taken a leading part, with Sir Henry Acland, in advocating the adoption of their Gothic design, was also interesting himself in the carvings and other decorations: see *The Oxford Museum* in Vol. XVI.]

Digitized by Google

other picture so right in manner of work, the utmost possible value being given to every atom of tint laid on the canvas. I happen to know that it was hastily finished, in an afterthought; and I am sorry to see that the painter has been fatigued to the point of not seeing how far he had failed in some parts of his purpose. He had another picture perfectly finished—and, though a little grotesque in fancy, exquisitely beautiful—"The King's Garden:" why has he not sent that?*

It is quite possible that, in this nativity, thoughtless people may be offended by an angel's being set to hold a stable lantern. Everybody is ready to repeat pretty verses from Spenser about angels who "watch and truly ward,"[1] without ever asking themselves what they look out for, or what they ward off; everybody is also ready to talk about ministering spirits,[2] so long as it is not asked what ministry means. Perhaps they might even reach to a distinct idea of such practical ministries on the part of angels as warding off a bullet from their son in India, or leading him to a spring when he was thirsty. But they cannot conceive that highest of all dignity in the entirely angelic ministration which would simply do rightly whatever needed to be done —great or small—and steady a stable lantern if it swung uneasily, just as willingly as drive back a thunder-cloud, or helm a ship with a thousand souls in it from a lee shore.

* The absence of the other Pre-Raphaelite leaders from their posts is highly to be reprobated. They have no business to set themselves to work which they can't finish in proper time. Every year, at this season, the moment they have seen the effect of their pictures on the public, every one of them should go into the country, and before the long days are half over each of them should have painted one picture of moderate size for next year: let them lock that up, and resolve not to look at it again till they see it on the Academy walls. Then set themselves to whatever perennial labour they choose to undertake, resting from it always about Easter, so as to be quite fresh to begin their regular Academy work again in May.[3]

[1] ["They for us fight, they watch and dewly ward."—*Faerie Queene*, book ii. canto viii. 2.]

[2] [Hebrews i. 14.]

[3] [Mr. Hughes exhibited "The King's Garden" in 1859. See p. 232.]

Digitized by Google

300. Weary Life. (*R. Carrick.*)

A notable picture; very great in many respects, but with grievous faults. The two principal figures are quite right—more especially the child; nothing can be more beautiful than the way it lies, nothing much better than the painting of it; and the thought of the whole singularly pathetic. But that thought is only half developed. I am amazed that a painter of Mr. Carrick's sincerity should allow himself in the conventionalisms of this design. What light is this that is cast on the two sleeping figures—morning?—evening?—noon? All suppositions are alike negatived by those trees in the background, which are in the deepest twilight; the rick under which the figures rest is also in darkness; and thus, for a mere effect of stage illumination on his foreground, the painter has lost all the pathos which there would have been in the calm of long, low sunshine on the solemn fields; or in the dew of the morning upon their peace—after the theatre's fantastic nocturns. The whole value of the background, as a space for informing incident, is also lost. No story is told by the dull trees. I will not take away Mr. Carrick's freedom and pleasure in invention by offering any suggestion as to the incidents that might occupy that background, but assuredly it ought not to be empty. Besides all this, the wonder of the peasant woman is vulgarly told—her gesture at this moment is highly improbable. She could not have approached so near the figures without seeing them before; unless we suppose her to have walked backwards, which indeed she might have done in raking: but the gesture has an unnatural and theatrical look for all that; and her face is utterly without expression. When there are only three figures in a picture, we must not make a nonentity of the nearest.

And lastly, the painting is throughout too hard; the straw especially is far too much defined. Has Mr. Carrick never looked carefully at the straw in the first picture which

Digitized by Google

showed the beauty of it—the "Dove Returning to the Ark"[1]—in which not a single stem was entirely defined, and yet all was real. It needs to be constantly kept in mind by all painters, that good painting must be reserved as well as expressive—it withholds always as much as it reveals. All mystery, or all clearness, is equally wrong, though clearness is the noblest error. Nature is simple, and therefore intelligible; but she is also infinite, and therefore mysterious. Whenever you can make a bit of painting quite out, that bit of it is wrong. There is no exception to this rule.

The picture is, however, so beautiful, in spite of all these defects, that it becomes almost the duty of the painter to perfect it.[2]

326. A Pastoral.[3] (*J. C. Hook, A.*)

Exquisite in idea, and some qualities of colour, as Mr. Hook's pictures are always; but by no means better than what he did last year, and if not better, then necessarily a little worse. Pause is, I believe, not possible in art. It is a pity thoughts so beautiful should not be entirely realized: this is, at best, but a full and suggestive sketch. It is not the way to paint a dog, nor a woman's arm, nor a sky.

453 ["The Coast Boy gathering Eggs"] is again entirely right and beautiful in conception, but imperfect in touch. There is a peculiar truth in the way he has given the deep tone of the colour of the sea, out of which the surf opens upon the rocks, like a great light, the snowy glare and roar coming at the same instant.

[1] [The picture by Millais exhibited in 1851; one of those bequeathed by Mr. Combe to the University Gallery at Oxford. Ruskin had noticed the picture in his letters to the *Times* in 1851: see Vol. XII. pp. 323, 325.]

[2] [Which the painter accordingly did; see the anecdote told above, Introduction, p. xxv.]

[3] [Illustrated in the catalogue by two lines from Spenser's *Shepheards' Calender*:—

"Then blowe your pypes, shepheards, til you be at home;
The night higheth fast, yts time to be gone."]

Digitized by Google

350. Flower Girls — Town and Country. (*J. C. Horsley, A.*)

The boldest effort we have yet seen from Mr. Horsley's hand, and I think a very telling one. It is another example of the moralizing tendency of the art of the day; but if Mr. Horsley makes his ladies going to masquerades look so charming in their gay dresses, I fear they will continue to wear them, in spite of poor flower-girls leaning against the gate-pillars, or innocent examples of life in the country.

372.[1] (*A. L. Egg.*)

As I see that several mistakes have been made in the interpretation of this impressive picture in the public prints, I give the true reading of it, though I should have thought it was clearly enough legible. In the central piece the husband discovers his wife's infidelity: he dies five years afterwards. The two lateral pictures represent the same moment of night a fortnight after his death. The same little cloud is under the moon. The two children see it from the chamber in which they are praying for their lost mother; and their mother, from behind a boat under a vault on the river-shore. The painting, as such, is not first-rate; but the purpose of the picture is well reached, and the moonlight is true and beautiful.

428. Past and Present. (*Miss A. Blunden.*)

There is not a more painstaking nor sincere piece of work than this in the room; though it is clearly the work of a hand which has not yet gained its full strength. The figures are far from satisfactory; but there are pieces of the old manor

[1] [The picture was given no title in the catalogue, but the following extract was printed in explanation:—
"August the 4th. Have just heard that B—— has been dead more than a fortnight, so his poor children have now lost both parents. I hear *she* was seen on Friday last near the Strand, evidently without a place to lay her head. What a fall hers has been!"]

Digitized by Google

house and foreground thoroughly felt, and very nearly got right—much righter in general tone of colour than is usual in early work so far carried. The picture is very curious in its quantity of work, and well worth a long stoop to it.

422. The Gaoler's Daughter: A Scene from the French Revolution. (*P. H. Calderon.*[1])

The figure of the imprisoned priest is perfectly right and beautiful: the girl nearly so, but the child ought to be repainted; it spoils a very touching picture. Mr. Calderon had a promising little interior picture in the British Institution.[2]

485. The Ducal Palace, Venice. (*D. Roberts, R.A.*)

As this seems to be a definite and energetic protest by Mr. Roberts against Turner's idea of Venetian colour, and against all that I have endeavoured to urge or describe in support of that conception, I can only accept it as such, and pass it by;[3] but I may at least say that protests against

[1] [Philip Hermogenes Calderon (1833–1898) was elected A.R.A. in 1864, R.A. in 1867, and appointed Keeper in 1887. A picture by him, exhibited in 1891, which excited much attention at the time, is now in the Tate Gallery (No. 1573, "The Renunciation of St. Elizabeth of Hungary").]

[2] [No. 144. "Far Away."]

[3] [See below, p. 220, for further criticism of Roberts' Venetian pictures; and for an anecdote regarding these criticisms, above, in the Introduction, p. xxix. Ruskin saw the artist at work in Venice in 1851, and predicted that no great things would result. He wrote to his father:—

"*29th September* [1851].— . . . I saw David Roberts to-day; what you say of him is very true. But Venice has been used to all kinds of libels, and must put up with it. Nobody could draw her but John Lewis.

"*23rd October.*—Mr. Roberts left us last night at half-past nine to go to Trieste and home by Vienna. He is hurried away from *Venice* to go to paint the *Great Exhibition* for the Queen. However, Venice does not lose much. He has been what he calls sketching, and brought me his books to look at last night. He sketches the Ducal Palace this way [very rough sketch], and says it is quite enough. How he is ever to work up his sketches I cannot imagine—however, I am rather an unfair judge, for I am morbidly accurate; but it just shows what a man comes to, when he draws for the *Exhibition* only—and then they affect to despise the Pre-Raphaelites. I am the more sorry to see him failing in this way, for he is thoroughly kind, upright, and good-natured—upright at least in all but pretending to draw things when he does not."]

Digitized by Google

gondoliers' management of their boats are not likely to be effective.[1] No gondolier can by any possibility get into any one of the positions here supposed, more especially that of the figure on the left. A gondola is rowed from a little elevated deck, with a raised slope for the hindmost foot, close at its stern, not near the felze (canopy), and at his fullest thrust forward the rower's position is well over the boat's side on his left hand; so that if he missed his stroke, he would go head-foremost into the water on that side, without even touching the felze: the certainty of which result renders a tyro's first efforts with the stern oar exceedingly interesting—as well as the no less precise certainty that if he catches a crab (and fish of this species may be easily secured on a windy day), he must go instantly into the water over the stern.

499. Reynard's Glove. (*Miss A. F. Mutrie.*)

Very pretty, indeed, Miss Mutrie, as usual; but you know those are perfect dwarfs of foxgloves. Bud, bell, and seed, I counted one hundred and forty-eight on one stem last summer (under the last crag of the Ochils that looks to Stirling),[2] and an average foxglove that has at all enjoyed its life will always have seventy or eighty. One energetic fellow I saw near Inverness, who had not indeed enjoyed his life, but had grandly made the best of it; he had been broken down in his youth—his head laid down hill, past all rising again: but he had lost no courage, thrown out three upright shoots from the side of his stem, and become three foxgloves instead of one.

500. Daughters of the Alhambra. (*J. Phillip, A.*)

All Mr. Phillip's work is able, and, to a certain extent, right; but I think he has never again done anything so

[1] [Compare some further remarks in the *Notes* of 1859, p. 220; and compare Vol. XIII. p. 116.]

[2] [Ruskin was in Scotland with his parents, Aug.–Sept. 1857. See *Præterita*, iii. ch. i.; *Two Paths*, § 1; and *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, i. 214.]

Digitized by Google

good as his picture of the church door two years ago.[1] He is losing refinement; while his Spanish ladies—and still more his Spanish lovers—seem to me all somewhat more Phillippian than Castilian. This picture is, however, a good example—rich, and pleasantly composed.

526. THE WARREN. (*J. W. Oakes.*[2])

Exquisitely painted in the flowery centre; but of all foregrounds, one of sand and bent grass least pays labour: and why does Mr. Oakes concentrate his strength on foregrounds only? He had a beautiful barley-field in the British Institution—with butterflies on it, and some nice furze and thistles besides; but a great deal more of them than was wanted; while the distance was wholly crude and unsatisfactory.

528. PEACEFUL DAYS. (*P. R. Morris.*[3])

Very beautiful, and easier in mode of laying colour than most of the work of the year.

557. SUNSET ON THE LAGUNE. (*E. W. Cooke, R.A.*)

I can answer for the truth of this study, representing one of the calm sea-glories of Venice, which painters are too apt to despise, though poets never.[4] Both Shelley and Byron seem to have loved these Euganean Hills and the sunsets behind them more than Venice herself.

[1] [See above, p. 58.]

[2] [John Wright Oakes (1820–1887) was a member of the Liverpool Academy, and his subjects were chiefly found in Wales. There is a small picture by him in the South Kensington Museum. He was elected A.R.A. in 1876.]

[3] [Philip Richard Morris (1835–1902) is best known to the present generation by his pretty portraits of women and children. At an early period, when he had come under the influence of Holman Hunt, he was looked upon as one of the most promising of the coming men. He was elected A.R.A. in 1877.]

[4] [The picture was of San Giorgio in Alga with the Euganean Hills in the distance. Plate 15 in *Modern Painters*, vol. iii., is from a drawing by Ruskin of the same scene:

Digitized by Google

562. "Thou wert our Conscript."[1] (*H. Wallis.*)

On the whole, to my mind, the picture of the year; and but narrowly missing being a first-rate of any year. It is entirely pathetic and beautiful in purpose and colour; its only fault being a somewhat too heavy laying of the body of paint, more especially in the distant sky, which has no joy nor clearness when it is looked close into, and in the blue of the hills that rise against it, which is also too uniform and dead. All perfect painting is light painting—light at some point of the touch at all events; no half inch of a good picture but tells, when it is looked at, "None but my master could have laid me so."

The ivy, ferns, etc., seem to me somewhat hastily painted; but they are lovely in colour, and may pass blameless, as I think it would have been in false taste to elaborate this subject further. The death quietness given by the action of the startled weasel is very striking.

see also Plate A in Vol. X. of this edition. Shelley's description of sunset, as seen from this point, is in *Julian and Maddalo* :—

"Half the sky
Was roofed with clouds of rich emblazonry,
Dark purple at the zenith, which still grew
Down the steep West into a wondrous hue
Brighter than burning gold, even to the rent
Where the swift sun yet paused in his descent
Among the many folded hills: they were
Those famous Euganean Hills."

Byron's description is in *Childe Harold*, canto iv., stanzas 27, 28. Ruskin describes these hills as seen from Venice—"blue islands of Paduan hills, poised in the golden west"—in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. ix. § 1; see also ch. i. of vol. ii. of *The Stones of Venice*, for sunset "behind the belfry tower of the lonely island church, fitly named 'St. George of the Seaweed.'"]

[1] [The reference is to the chapter on the dignity of labour in *Sartor Resartus* (bk. iii. ch. iv.) :—

"Hardly entreated brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed; thou wert our conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. For in thee too lay a God-created form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of labour; and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom."]

Digitized by Google

854. THE RIVALS, FROM CLYNNOG BEACH. (*C. F. Williams.*)

The magnificent sketch by Landseer in this room,[1] showing, as it does, all his wonderful handling on the boldest scale, must withdraw all eyes at first from the lower walls. But when due honour has been done to the deer, this careful and unpretending study deserves a minute's stooping to it, admirable as it is alike in rendering of extent of wet sand, weedy shingle, and breaking wave; and then it would be well to cross to 609,[2] which, though not an altogether successful effort, is a most earnest one to render the mingling of transparency with reflection in pure and perfect sea. Who ever dreamed of painting sea like this till now? and yet that is simply the normal state of sea. What we have been in the habit, taught by the Dutch, of calling sea pieces ought to be called merely mud-bottom pieces.

1089. STONEBREAKER.[3] (*J. Brett.*)

This, after John Lewis's, is simply the most perfect piece of painting with respect to touch in the Academy this year; in some points of precision it goes beyond anything the Pre-Raphaelites have done yet. I know no such thistle-down, no such chalk hills, and elm-trees, no such natural pieces of far-away cloud, in any of their works.

The composition is palpably crude and wrong in many ways, especially in the awkward white cloud at the top;

[1] [No. 800. "Deerstalking."]

[2] ["Anstey's Cove, South Devon," by H. Anelay.]

[3] [This picture, now in the possession of James Barrow, Esq., is reproduced in Mr. P. H. Bate's *English Pre-Raphaelite Painters*. It was bought during the exhibition. "I am exceedingly glad," wrote Ruskin to his father (Bellinzona, June 22, 1858), "Brett has sold his picture, for he is a fine fellow as well as a good painter. I hope he will do some beautiful things at Sallenches." John Brett (1832–1902), who first made his mark, by the pictures noticed here and below (p. 234), as a painter of landscape on Pre-Raphaelite principles (see below, p. 434), afterwards became better known as a sea-painter. His "Britannia's Realm" is in the Tate Gallery (No. 1617). To a catalogue of an exhibition of works by him in 1886 he prefixed some accounts of his methods and of his careful "finish." He was elected A.R.A. in 1881. Ruskin refers to him as "one of my keenest-minded friends" in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vii. § 24. See also *The Art of England*, § 8.]

Digitized by Google

and the tone of the whole a little too much as if some of the chalk of the flints had been mixed with all the colours. For all that, it is a marvellous picture, and may be examined inch by inch with delight; though nearly the last stone I should ever have thought of any one's sitting down to paint would have been a chalk flint. If he can make so much of that, what will Mr. Brett not make of mica slate and gneiss! If he can paint so lovely a distance from the Surrey downs and railway-traversed vales, what would he not make of the chestnut groves of the Val d'Aosta! I heartily wish him good-speed and long exile.[1]

[1] [Brett went to the Val d'Aosta in the summer of this year (1858). Ruskin was at Turin at the time, and discussed with the painter the picture he was engaged upon (see below, p. 238 *n.*). Ruskin's visit has a memorial in his description of the Alps from Turin ("Inaugural Lecture at Cambridge," Oct. 1858, reprinted in Vol. XVI. The result of Brett's visit was exhibited in the next year's Academy.]

Digitized by Google

FRENCH EXHIBITION

GENERALLY, this Exhibition is full of interest, and instructive to our English painters in the evidence of steady training shown in its work. It is dominant in scenes of domestic life; deficient in landscape.

7. THE PLOUGH. (*Mdlle. Rosa Bonheur.*[1])

This lady gains in power every year, but there is one stern fact concerning art which she will do well to consider, if she means her power to reach full development. No painter of animals ever yet was entirely great who shrank from painting the human face; and Mdlle. Bonheur clearly *does* shrink from it. Of course, a ploughman ploughing westward at evening slouches his hat and stoops his head; but the back of him, in this action, with a foreshortened yoke of oxen, and three of the awkwardest

[1] [Rosa Bonheur (1822–1899). The "Horse Fair" was exhibited at the Salon in 1853, and afterwards in London. A repetition of it, now in the National Gallery (No. 621), was the first work by a living foreign artist to be admitted there. Ruskin made Rosa Bonheur's acquaintance when she was in England in 1856, staying with Gambart, the dealer. Frederick Goodall, who was present on one occasion when Ruskin was dining with her, thus records the conversation. "After he had seen most of her studies of Highland cattle, he asked, 'Why don't you work in water-colours, for if you did you could, with a very fine sable brush, put in every hair in your studies.' Her answer was, 'I do not paint in water-colour, and I could not; it would be impossible to put in every hair; even a photo could not do it.' 'If you come and dine with me some day,' he retorted, 'I will show you a water-colour drawing—made in Scotland—in which I put in every leaf of a tree in the foreground.' By and by, when she spoke of the Old Masters, of Titian, and especially of the Entombment of Christ, he only remarked, 'How wonderful the little flowers in the foreground are painted!' I felt at the moment that she took the larger view of art. Mr. Ruskin continued, 'I do not see that you use purple in your shades.' 'But,' she said, 'I never see shade two days alike, and I never see it purple.' 'I always see it purple,' and he emphasised it, 'yes: red and blue.' After Mr. Ruskin took his leave, Gambart asked her opinion about him. 'He is a gentleman,' she said, 'an educated gentleman; but he is a theorist. He sees nature with a little eye—*tout à fait comme un oiseau*'" (*Reminiscences of Frederick Goodall*, 1902, p. 130).]

Digitized by Google

haystacks in France, do not altogether constitute a subject for a picture. In the "Horse Fair" the human faces were nearly all dexterously, but disagreeably, hidden, and the one chiefly shown had not the slightest character. Mdlle. Bonheur may rely upon this, that if she cannot paint a man's face, she can neither paint a horse's, a dog's, nor a bull's. There is in every animal's eye a dim image and gleam of humanity, a flash of strange light through which their life looks out and up to our great mystery of command over them, and claims the fellowship of the creature, if not of the soul. I assure Mdlle. Bonheur, strange as the words may sound to her, after what she has been told by huntsmen and racers, she has never painted a horse yet. She has only painted trotting bodies of horses.[1]

62. The Gleaner Boy. (*Edouard Frère.*)

The expressions of admiration for this painter's work which I used last year were thought by many readers to have been written in a fit of momentary and uncalculating enthusiasm. I repeat therefore—after a year's deliberation—with such plain and purposed meaning as I always try to give words which I know will seem questionable, that this painter unites "the depth of Wordsworth, the grace of Reynolds, and the holiness of Angelico."[2]

That is to say, first, he approaches the simplest subject with perfect feeling of its great humanity, conscious of all the most solemn pathos which there is in the crowned sorrows of poverty and calm submissions of toil—interpreting to the full, and for the first time in the history of

[1] [Ruskin reverts to this criticism in a letter to his father, written after reading a book on Horse Taming :—

"Turin, *August* 19 [1858].—Among the many things which pleased me (I shall forget to say this if I don't say it at once) was the testimony it bore to that peculiar fineness of make, and subtlety of spirit in the horse which I think Lewis has expressed so exquisitely and Rosa Bonheur missed so ignorantly—'a single harsh word will raise a nervous horse's pulse ten beats a minute.'"]

[2] [See above, p. 142, and below, p. 347.]

Digitized by Google

sacred paintings, the great words of the first Beatitude.[1] For the poverty which was honoured by the great painters and thinkers of the Middle Ages was an ostentatious, almost a presumptuous poverty: if not this, at least it was chosen and accepted—the poverty of men who had given their goods to feed the simpler poor, and who claimed in honour what they had lost in luxury; or, at the best, in claiming nothing for themselves, had still a proud understanding of their own self-denial, and a confident hope of future reward. But it has been reserved for this age to perceive and tell the blessedness of another kind of poverty than this; not voluntary nor proud, but accepted and submissive; not clear-sighted nor triumphant, but subdued and patient: partly patient in tenderness—of God's will; partly patient in blindness—of man's oppression; too laborious to be thoughtful—too innocent to be conscious—too long experienced in sorrow to be hopeful—waiting in its peaceful darkness for the unconceived dawn; yet not without its own sweet, complete, untainted happiness, like intermittent notes of birds before the daybreak, or the first gleams of heaven's amber on the eastern grey. Such poverty as this it has been reserved for this age of ours to honour while it afflicted; it is reserved for the age to come to honour it—and to spare.

I said, secondly, that this painter had "the grace of Reynolds"—that is to say, grace consummate, no painter having ever before approached Reynolds in the rendering of the momentary loveliness and trembling life of childhood, by beauty of play and change in every colour and curve. The great Venetians were too great to do it; their lines were always grave and severe in their grace; and all other men but Reynolds have been too mean to do it, until this one.

And, lastly, I say he has the holiness of Angelico—that is to say, perfect purity from all sensual taint, from all baseness of associated ideas, there never passing over his

[1] [Matthew v. 3. The blessing on "the poor in spirit; for their's is the kingdom of heaven" is often quoted by Ruskin; see, for instance, the preface on *Usury*, § 4; *Munera Pulveris*, § 56 *n.*; and *Aratra Pentelici*, § 139.]

Digitized by Google

brow so much as the shadow of an Evil Spirit's wings. This I say of him; and also that the man of whom this may truly be said is, if he uses his power faithfully, simply and briefly one of the chief men of this century. But on his faithfulness to the gift of his deep heart all now rests; and he is at present failing in this faithfulness. I noticed last year[1] that there were certain characters in his painting which, in any other man's work, would have been faults, and which were only to be forgiven in him so far as they were unavoidable in getting his main result. Now this year the main result is not better—is not even quite so good; and the faults are more conspicuous, proving themselves therefore faults positive. The colour even of the faces is less pure; that of the background is becoming dark and heavy; it is difficult to see even as much as the painter intends us to see: we feel as if there were a coating of clay over the work which wants to be washed off. This manner of painting will assuredly gain upon him, unless he sets a standard to himself far beyond it; and I believe he will have to paint some pieces of still life, in which no question of feeling or of harmony of expression will interfere with his efforts, up to the highest point of finish possible to him, for exercise merely: afterwards receding from the precision and brilliancy he does not want when he uses such passages in his pictures. Take, for instance, the piece of near grass in this "Gleaner": it, of course, in no wise resembles grass; not a leaf of it is true, nor is it lovely; it is merely an indication of the thing meant, in a tone harmonious with the rest of the work. Now the painter ought not only to see more in the grass than this, but ought to be able to paint more, without hurting his general effect.* So, also,

* The reader may perhaps be surprised at my speaking here somewhat in the tone of one of the men of the old "generalization" school—about subduing parts for the effect of the whole. But this is because I do not consider Frère's as finished pictures, but as sketches of expression. In a finished picture all must be finished; and in a sketch all must be sketched, up to an harmonious point—nothing beyond that point. Frère's faces are

[1] [See above, p. 142.]

Digitized by Google

in the corn which the boy carries, there is none of the beauty or complexity of a real cluster of wheat; and if the artist would draw the real sheaf perfectly, he would be able to make the number of touches he has permitted himself here, quite as subordinate, but far more lovely. The sadness of colour which he chooses is indeed a part, and a very important part, of the pathos of his subjects; but he must take care not to allow melancholy to sink into ennui, nor humility to degenerate into dulness.

I take no separate note of the other pictures by him in this room, for I believe the persons who can feel them at all will feel them without being much talked to about them; only it should be observed generally that the greatness of Frère consists in such slight things that it is only by long looking at his work that it can be felt. The difference between him and all other painters of similar subjects is quite infinite; and yet it depends literally on hairbreadths, and less than hairbreadths—on the ineffable subtlety of line which makes gesture or expression precisely *right*. Examine, for instance, the way the child leans on her sister, pushing a little to get at the shells in her lap, in No. 59,[1] and consider how it is that all the child's mind is given in its attitude—all its fitful, troublesome, innocent, inconsequent eagerness, just in the turn of a sleeve!

not finished; he seems to pause just when he has touched the truth of expression, lest he should lose it by doing more. Then, of course, the accessories must not be finished in a higher degree; he must be content with the expression only of those—as with the expression only of the human face. The rule I gave for finished pictures is a perfectly true one—namely, that if you paint faces ill, you must not try to mend them by painting backgrounds worse;[2] but it is also a true rule, that if you sketch a figure lightly, you must not finish the burden it carries heavily, nor give a completion to the lesser thing which you have refused to the greater. The picture, No. 63, is, however, very nearly up to his mark of last year. The hair of the child is beautifully touched.

[1] [The editors are unable to identify all the pictures referred to in the French Exhibition of 1858. The British Museum does not possess the catalogues, nor is there a copy of the 1858 issue at the Gallery itself.]

[2] [See above, pp. 55, 118.]

Digitized by Google

103. SEA-SHORE AT BLANKENBURG: AFTERNOON. (*Henri Le Hon.*)

Very clever in the balanced depressions of tone which bring out the gleams of light on boat and sea, and showing, I think, great feeling and skill in the painter; but this depression of tone is, nevertheless, a standing mistake of the French school. The French painters always chill the colours of Nature as they lower them, by toning everything with grey; and thus not only alter the depth and pitch of the colour, but the colour itself. They do not merely change its key, but debase its nature,—that is to say, if they have trees to lower, they turn what is in reality pale *pure* green into dark *dirty* green, when they ought to change it only into a darker green of the same purity; and if they have pale yellow sand to lower, instead of lowering it to a dark yellow, equally glowing, they lower it to a dark grey, and thus turn sand into slime. It is very curious, that in spite of all the talk about Titian, this simple principle of his colouring has never been understood. When Titian lowers tones, he always lowers them without changing the colours.[1] Pale blue he translates into ultramarine, pale rose-colour into crimson, pale sand-colour into deep brown, and pale green into emerald green; but he never pollutes the blue sky with blackness, nor stains pale roses with clay: whereas, nearly all the French landscapes in this room represent Nature seen through a smoked glass. If the sky had only been half as livid at the last eclipse of the sun as the French landscapists represent it on sunny afternoons, the birds would have gone to roost in a much more satisfactory way than I hear they did.[2]

[1] [For the importance Ruskin attached to this principle, see above, Introduction, p. xxvii.]

[2] [The reference is to the total eclipse of the sun early in the afternoon of March 15, 1858. The astronomers and newspapers had furnished accounts of what ought to have been seen, and work was generally neglected in order to witness so rare a phenomenon. But the afternoon proved cloudy and very little was seen. "The phenomena

Digitized by Google

108. THE STUDY. (*Louis Ernest Meissonier.*[1])

I look upon this work and its companion (109)[2] with exceeding sorrow, for they show great powers wasted in producing results either useless or worse than useless, in so far as they encourage the disposition of the modern patron—so long fatal to the best interests and highest purposes of art—to spend his wealth in petty luxuries of the drawing-room, instead of in the bold and large art which is visible to all men, and helpful to all men. I have never in any wise joined in the vague cry raised usually by ambitious and weak painters, for public encouragement to "high art," or "historical art," as if art might not be both high and historical on a small scale as well as a large one.[3] But, on the other hand, I have always protested, in the strongest way I could, against the miserable degradation of pictures, by the influence of the Dutch schools, into toys for boudoirs, or marvels for cabinets.[4] And here is the old Dutch principle again in all its strength. Narrow, easily imitated, easily appreciated chiaroscuro, let in by a single window, to get dioramic relief—brown shadows—bright touches—dull surfaces—coppery colours; all Flanders and Holland over again. Quite as good as ever Holland did—nay, it seems to me, in some respects, better; but assuredly quite as wretched, as forgetful of the high purposes of painting, and as traitorous to the royalty of human nature.

which accompanied the eclipse were equally disappointing. At the period of greatest obscuration, the darkness did not exceed that of a gloomy afternoon. Animals and birds seemed very little discomposed by the early accession of twilight. . . . It was somewhat amusing to hear the angry remarks of the populace at their disappointment" (*Annual Register*, 1858, pp. 44–45).]

[1] [Louis Ernest Meissonier (1815–1891), the most famous "small master" of France. In the Wallace collection there are sixteen examples of his work. One of his Napoleon series ("1814") was at one time in Ruskin's collection: see pp. 381, 438, 447, in this volume.]

[2] ["The Courtier."]

[3] [See, *e.g.*, *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 49–52).]

[4] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. viii. § 2.]

Digitized by Google

130. The Music Lesson. (*Emile Plassan.*)

Exquisite in touch of pencil, and in appreciation of delicate character, both in features and gesture.[1]

It is lighter and softer in laying of colour than Frère's work, and more refined in colour than Meissonier's; on the whole, it seems to me the best piece of quiet painting in the room. The French painters far surpass us in their understanding of the light expressions and trivial actions of daily life; partly because they aim at them more simply, and are content to be true and polished, while our painters are always striving to be heroic, moral, or amusing; but also, I suppose, from an innate tact and sympathy which we never have possessed—nor can possess.

139. Marguerite at the Fountain. (*Ary Scheffer.*[2])

As this picture is designed on the assumption that the universe generally is vulgar, and that the noblest ideal of colour is to be found in dust, it of course puts itself beyond criticism. But it suggests a curious question. It may be —I believe it is—a just view of the depth and purity of

[1] [This picture, as also Lewis's "Inmate of the Hareem" (see above, p. 159), was bought, without his son's knowledge, by Ruskin's father, who recorded the event in a letter to Professor Norton, dated May 31, 1858: "It is long since I have bought a picture (my son going sufficiently deep into the luxury), but I was tempted by three small ones at the first glance—Plassan's Music Lesson, French Exhibition; Lewis's Inmate of the Hareem, R. Academy; Lewis's Lilies and Roses, R. Academy. I did not tell my son I had bought the first till his *Notes* were printed—not that it could bias him, but it might have cramped his critique. When his *Notes* were out I told him the picture was his, and I was glad he had spoken, say written, so well of it. As the *Times* calls the Inmate of the Hareem a masterpiece of masterpieces, and the *Spectator* styles it a marvellous gem, it is a pretty safe purchase. I had it at home before the public saw it" ("Letters of John Ruskin—II.," edited by Charles Eliot Norton, *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1904, vol. 93, p. 801).]

[2] [Ary Scheffer (1795–1858) was by birth Dutch, by residence and training French. His well-known picture of "St. Augustine and St. Monica" is in the Tate Gallery (No. 1170). For another reference to him, see above, p. 114. In a letter, written to E. S. Dallas about 1860, Ruskin somewhat mitigates his judgment on Ary Scheffer. "Though one of the heads of the Mud sentiment school, he does *draw* and *feel* very beautifully and deeply" (*Letters on Art and Literature*, p. 38, privately issued 1894, and reprinted in a later volume of this edition).]

Digitized by Google

Marguerite's character, which assumes that the first whispers of her companions would not flush her face but turn it pale. But, supposing the painter should ever wish to paint a woman "glowing all over noble shame,"[1] how will he reconcile the human crimson with the dusty insensibilities of his background?

[1] [Ida in Tennyson's *Princess* (vii.). Ruskin again uses the quotation in his address on "The Value of Drawing" to the St. Martin's School of Art (see Vol. XVI.).]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS

84. Borromean Islands on the Lago Maggiore (?). (*J. B. Pyne.*[1])

I am sincerely glad to see that Mr. Pyne has succeeded in reaching better qualities of colour than in his earlier pictures. I had feared the range of his work had been limited by natural incapacity for the perception of hue; but he begins to disprove such incapacity, and it seems to me quite at his own choice whether he will now become a real artist, or remain merely a popular draughtsman and supplier of the market with "lake scenery." It is at his own choice, I repeat—but only at his resolute choice; for he has much to surrender of his own, and much to learn from the external world. His own part in the conception of this No. 84, for instance, is somewhat too manifest, and highly curious. The picture appears to represent an inlet of green water among desolate rocks, somewhere near the North Pole; the faint, pure, frosty, Arctic light penetrating into their jagged hollows; a shore of grey slime, washed down from the glaciers, stretches into the shallow water of the inlet, on which tongue of land (at the right hand of the spectator) Mr. Pyne has erected a small model of an Italian campanile and some clay houses. On the slope of the hill

[1] [James Baker Pyne (1800–1870) published in 1853 "The English Lake District," and in 1859 "The Lake Scenery of England." In 1842 he was admitted a member of the Society of British Artists, and for some years he was its Vice-President. The South Kensington Museum has some of his pictures, and the Tate Gallery one (No. 1545). In the first volume of *Modern Painters*, Ruskin had regretted that "this clever artist appears to be losing all sense of colour, and is getting more and more mannered in execution, evidently never studying from Nature except with the previous determination to Pynize everything" (Vol. III. p. 479). An interesting appreciation of Pyne is given in W. J. Stillman's *Autobiography of a Journalist*, vol. i. ch. vi.]

Digitized by Google

above he has carried his bitterness of mockery of any lost navigator to the extent of setting up some pillars as they usually stand in the alleys of vineyards, and arranging some copper foliage upon them, having a resemblance to vine leaves, distant indeed, but yet clear enough to be very painful to persons suffering from cold and hunger. It is true there is some Iceland moss in the foreground—(is it not slightly too brown for that lichen?); and his malice towards his fellow-men is tempered by some kindness for animals, since, by raising an island traversed by alternate terraces and slopes, in the middle of the lagoon, he has provided for the exercise and amusement of the white bears, who, it is well known, are fond of sliding down small slopes of this kind on their hind-quarters.

If Mr. Pyne is determined to paint these Arctic desolations, he would find that their real incidents were in the end more interesting, though less startling, than these grotesque introductions of Surrey-garden decoration; but I do not see why he should confine himself to Northern subjects. Among the Italian lakes, to one of which this very Polar scene bears (except in the forms of the mountains) so singular a resemblance as to have caused, I presume, the mistake in the catalogue, he would find materials which, though at first much more difficult to treat, would, in the end, reward his labour with a richer charm: shores dark with ilex and soft with olive are surely pleasanter than slimy shallows; and the Alps of the Simplon, soaring through their twelve thousand feet of air, purple with everlasting pines, are better worth painting than these little crags jutting out of the pools of the glacial sea, and hardly high enough to catch a few of the level rays of the revolving sun upon their lichenless edges.

Seriously and heartily, I am sorry for Mr. Pyne: his work has now become well worth sorrow. I never knew before that he cared for rosy lights and blue shadows, or could feel that there were other forms in the world than those of Mendip limestones. But I see here that he can,

Digitized by Google

and that he is only shutting himself wilfully away from the beauty that he might delight in. All these scenes of fairy-land, which he supposes can only be got by fallacy, exist in truth—exist in tenderness and loveliness, greater than he has any dream of—greater than he could at present conceive possible. But between them and him lies a fiery trial. His work, clever though it be, is at present wrong to the very core, so fatally has he blinded himself to the great facts of the earth. If he could bear to have this false work and the false principles involved in it fairly burnt away—burnt to their foundations—and, after humiliation in their ashes, will paint steadily for six months from things quiet in colour and commonplace (as he will at first suppose) in form—solemnly resolving to allow himself neither a fallacy nor an avoidable incompletion; and having done this penance, will then seek again some of his favourite scenes, he will find a new world opened to him, from which he will never desire to wander more.

115. Mozart's Last Chorus. (*J. Morgan.*)

Not a good picture; but very touching in its subject,[1] and I think successful—(is it not? for musicians must be judges in this)—in the principal figure.

188. The Windings on the Wye. (*H. J. Boddington.*[2])

I am puzzled by the pictures of this class which the Society produces so abundantly. There are this year about fifty in the room of nearly equal average value; some are

[1] [Thus described in the catalogue: "It was evening. Mozart, ill and fatigued with working at his 'Requiem,' was delighted by a friend who came and told him that one of his operas was being performed at the theatre. His friend returned from time to time to report the progress they made. The composer, following the music in his own mind, at length became so excited, that he begged of each of his friends to take their part; had himself propped up in bed by his wife, Constance Weber, and led off in what proved, but too truly, his last chorus."]

[2] [Henry John Boddington (1811–1865) was one of the sons of Edward Williams, and changed his name because so many of the family were painters.]

Digitized by Google

a little richer in blue than others—some a little warmer in brown; a few, Mr. Syer's chiefly—(201, for instance[1])—are more dexterous and light in touch than the rest; and one or two, like this 188, more ambitious in size and subject: but they may all be classed together as imperfect studies from pleasant mountain scenery, dependent for effect chiefly on redundance of rock forms and opposition of warm light to purple shade, with occasionally considerable tenderness of atmosphere—well studied reflections in water, and sharply touched sticks and stones in the foreground. Nevertheless, I do not look upon them as done by recipe. There is evidence in all of them that the painters have worked much out of doors, and have faced midges and wet weather many a long day before they could either get into those dexterous habits of rock-drawing, or give definite portraiture of all the rock basins in a torrent bed—as Mr. Pettitt has done in 189.[2] Moreover, I really think they love the hills: those elaborate pieces of mountain flank, touched with amber, look to me as if they were painted quite for love—not to speak of many pretty stones and cottages, and streams with foam on them, and even bubbles—yes, and for the first time, as far as I recollect, bubbles with colour (699).[3] But there is one fatal wrong in all of them, which is simply that nothing is *quite* right. The whole is respectable; but no single stone, no wreath of cloud, no cottage gable, is absolutely, decisively, insuperably good.

They are wrong, also, by having always too much of the same kind of thing: too much bank—all alike; too many rocks—all alike; each piece of the picture undoes another, and nobody ever feels inclined to ask for more.

Then, further, there are no strange things in them. Nature always looks strange when she is truly rendered, and is always doing what none of us expect from her. These painters never seem to get any out-of-the-way

[1] ["Mill near Aber, North Wales."]
[2] ["The Studio, Foss Novyn, on the Conway."]
[3] ["Otter Hunting at Pont-y-Pare, Bettws-y-Coed," by J. P. Pettitt.]

Digitized by Google

glimpses, or to catch one of the humours of the clouds in a wayward day. There was a little green bit of sunshine on the wet grass in the British Institution (234, C. Leslie),[1] which had far more sight in it than any of these large pictures, though sharing with them the last fault I have to name—overloading and too smooth laying of colour. Half as much paint would have produced a result twice as good. Titian would put glow into a whole head with no more paint than goes to one of the touches on these foregrounds.

252. A Fisherman's Daughter of Mola di Gaeta. (*F. Y. Hurlstone.*[2])

Is it too late for Mr. Hurlstone to recover himself? He might have been a noble painter. Bad and coarse as it is, that bright fish is the best piece of mere painting in all the rooms; and I believe, if Mr. Hurlstone would set himself fairly to take account of his own work, he might yet feel how fast he is sinking. If he would but look some morning for half an hour steadily and closely at that piece of Thames slime, stained with dim gouts and blotches of vermilion, which he has given in the place of a left hand to the fisherman's daughter; and then walk straight into the National Gallery, and look for another half-hour at the drooped left hand of the princess—holding her crown—in Veronese's picture,[3] I do believe he might yet be seized with desire to recover his ground;—and this desire, in him, would be capacity.

454. The Wife's Remonstrance. (*J. Campbell, jun.*)

By far the best picture in the Suffolk Street rooms this year; full of pathos, and true painting. But I fear Mr.

[1] ["A Break in the Clouds after the Storm."]
[2] [Frederick Yeates Hurlstone (1800–1869), was President of the Society of British Artists from 1835 until his death. His pictures were mostly historical in subject.]
[3] ["The Family of Darius," No. 294: see above, p. 118.]

Digitized by Google

Campbell is unredeemably under the fatal influence which shortens the power of so many of the Pre-Raphaelites—the fate of loving ugly things better than beautiful ones. In his "Visit to the Old Sailor" (800), he has painted the rugged face well, but quite spoiled the child's. He ought to repaint the child's face; the rest of the drawing is worth any pains he could spend on it.

783. Roast Chestnut Seller. (*F. Smallfield.*)

An interesting and successful study, as are also several other drawings by this artist in this room. But he seems to me to be imitating William Hunt's execution, without thoroughly understanding the motive of it. If he does not see things rough, he should not paint them so: in No. 716 ["The Woodman's Boy"] the blue sleeve looks like worsted work, not like painting. He has, however, two excellent studies in the Royal Academy (33, 877).[1]

[1] [33. "The Strange Gentleman." 877. "The May-Gatherer."]

Digitized by Google

NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS

18. THE BASS ROCK. (*J. W. Whymper.*[1])

A most interesting subject, truly seen, and well rendered up to a certain point. There is no high power of present execution shown in it; but I think the painter must have great feeling, and perhaps even the rare gift of invention. Those bird-clouds are well wreathed and tossed, so as to show the noble form of the rock. I hope this painter may advance far.

63. BARDJ. AÇOUSS.[2] (*Charles Vacher.*)

There is great beauty of tone in many of Mr. Vacher's drawings, and their impression is often most pleasing; but he should really leave out the figures for some time to come, exercising himself in figure-drawing in the meanwhile; and also he needs to study individual pieces of foreground with more respect for their local colours. He is working too much by recipe, and the nearer stones are here very meagre.

111. THE RISING OF THE GROUND SEA: TREBARWITH, CORNWALL. (*S. Cook.*)

This is a drawing full of merit and feeling for sea; but there are five others by this artist in the room, and in all

[1] [Josiah Wood Whymper (1813–1902), was elected an associate of the New Society in 1854, and a full member in 1857. He was a master of the craft of wood-engraving, among his pupils being Charles Keene and Frederick Walker.]

[2] [Part of the Roman Walls, from near the Valée Gate, Constantine, Algeria.]

Digitized by Google

of them there is a green sea under a slight breeze, breaking on a flat shore. The sea thus represented six times over is indeed very like salt-water, and the waves shake well along their edges, giving more suggestion than usual of the tremulousness which so often runs in a kind of electric current along the whole length of a breaker's edge as it rises. But I sincerely hope Mr. Cook will make some effort to break from this slavery to one kind of wave. He might teach himself and us a serviceable lesson by resolving, on the first morning of summer, when there was a likelihood of unsettled but not stormy weather during the day, to go down to the beach as soon after dawn as possible, and make a rapid sketch of the exact aspect of sea and sky at every two hours, as the day passed on, until sunset; afterwards trying to realize each with complete sincerity, and sending the nine drawings as a series to the next exhibition. He would find they attracted more notice than these repetitions of green breakers. 309[1] is, however, very lovely.

114. The Bay of Naples. (*T. L. Rowbotham.*)

What I said of Mr. Rowbotham's work last year[2] I must take leave to repeat, for I do believe there is the making of a good landscape painter in him. I think, in spite of all his artificialness, he has enthusiasm—loves what he tries to paint, and works hard; and where there is enthusiasm, and no shirking of labour, there is no saying what a painter may make of himself if once he takes the right turn of the road. Of the merely blottesque[3] workman I have far less hope. He is often more right, as far as he reaches, than the enthusiastic one; but there is no growth

[1] ["The Serpentine Rocks, Kynance Cove, Cornwall."]
[2] [See above, p. 135.]
[3] [For Ruskin's earlier use of this term, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 100–102).]

Digitized by Google

in him. Mr. Bennett,[1] for instance, perhaps looks out of his green shades with contempt on Mr. Rowbotham's white and blue, as feeling that he is simpler in heart and truer in purpose. But then he purposes nearly nothing—loving fields and trees only with a serene, vegetative affection; whereas if Mr. Rowbotham but once takes a fancy to finish one of his pretty subjects fairly on the spot—nay, if he but draws so much as the window of an Italian cottage completely—his mind will be altered about many matters before the sketch is well dry; and then all his admiration of rocks and lakes may be brought into good service. At present it is sufficiently sad to see him defrauding himself of the very picturesqueness he delights in, by painting out of what he supposes to be his head, but is, in reality, only his habit. He knows well enough, as well as I do, that those trios of similar windows (compare 180)[2] are not particularly interesting; but he does not yet know that they are also impossible, and that there are the most delightful window groups to be had every day, and in every place, merely for the trouble of looking at them and noting them down.

182. Song of the Georgian Maiden.[3] (*H. Warren.*[4])

Full of cleverness; but continually false in passages, owing to the violent striving for brilliancy. I do not dwell upon the errors, because so dexterous an artist must surely know them well enough himself, and I suppose, therefore, he means, for the sake of dazzling, to persist in them.

[1] [William Bennett (1811–1871) is believed to have been taught by David Cox. He became a member of the New Water-Colour Society in 1848, and was a constant exhibitor. He was also in request as a teacher. There is a good drawing by him in the Tate Gallery (No. 1722). He was represented in the Exhibition of 1858 by nineteen drawings, mostly of fields and trees. For another reference to his "quiet and correct studies," see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 599 *n.*).]

[2] ["Cetara in the Gulf of Salerno," by T. L. Rowbotham.]

[3] [Illustrating Moore's "Light of the Harem."]

[4] [Henry Warren (1794–1879) was President of the New Water-Colour Society from 1839 to 1873. He had originally studied sculpture (in the studio of Nollekens); then took to oil-painting, first exhibiting at the Academy in 1823; and afterwards adopting water-colour, became a member of the Society in 1835.]

Digitized by Google

207. In the Forest of Dean. (*Edmund G. Warren.*)

A very interesting study. The dark side of the trunk is singularly consistent and right in its gradations; the effect of the whole as true as it is possible for anything to be which is not delicately coloured, but depends for all its results on mere brown, grey, and green, laid in right chiaroscuro.

I fear the success is mechanical; but I wish that the younger Pre-Raphaelite painters, who cannot yet bring their details into true balance of force, would take note how much appearance of truth to Nature has been obtained in this drawing merely by the consistent relations of its shade, and would try to give the same consistency to their own truer hues.

218. Noah—A Miracle Play.[1] (*Edward H. Corbould.*[2])

An amusing subject, which would, however, have been more intelligible if Mr. Corbould had quoted some of the text of the play. I recollect reading it with great edification one wet day at Chester, some ten years ago; but I remember now only the heroic determination of Noah's wife, and the less heroic resolves of her gossips, expressed as follows: I cannot answer for the spelling:—

Three Gossips.—Here is a pottle full of Malmsey, gode and stronge,
Tho' Noe thynke us never so longe,
Yet we will drink alyke.

Noah's wife.—Yea, Noe, set up your sayle,
And row forth with evylle hayle.
But I love my gossippes, each one.
One foote further will I not gone;
They shall not drown—*by Saint John,*
And I may save their lyffe.
But thou shalt let them into that kist,
Els, row forth, Noe, where thou list,
And gette thee a new wyf.

[1] [Performed in the streets of Hull in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the catalogue were quoted various items from the MS. Book of Expenses of the Play.]

[2] [Edward Henry Corbould (*b.* 1815), a constant exhibitor at the New Water-Colour Society since 1837; many of his pictures are in the Royal collections. In 1851 he was appointed to instruct the Royal Family in drawing. For another reference to Mr. Corbould, see Vol. XIII. p. 400.]

Digitized by Google

223. A Study in Winter, Adel Moor. (*T. Sutcliffe.*)

The furze in this drawing is admirable, and the whole thing got straight from Nature; but Mr. Sutcliffe chooses his subjects ill, owing, I believe, to his not working enough in chiaroscuro merely, and allowing himself to be captivated by a single pretty bit, like those golden brambles on the purple rock, without considering whether the forms and arrangement of the whole are available. He should now study for some time with a view to arrangement only.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

OLD SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS

I CONGRATULATE the Society on its great advance this year. I have placed my notes on their drawings last, because it is pleasant to stay latest with old friends.

15. SNOWDON FROM CAPEL CURIG. (*D. Cox.*[1])

Though Mr. Cox's work is every year broader in handling, and therefore further, as mere work, from the completeness I would generally advocate, it becomes always more majestic or more interesting in conception. I have deeper sympathy with some of his this year's drawings than with any I ever yet saw from his hand. This is a rich and beautiful one; but the bits please me most which no one but he would have thought of painting, and which are made pictures of by a little thing in the right place, as 178 ["Going to Market"] is by the black and white dog. The bank above, and distance, are wonderful pieces of grey colour.

[1] [David Cox died in the year following this Exhibition, aged seventy-six. Ruskin's eulogy of him in the first edition of the first volume of *Modern Painters* (1843) had been as follows: "David Cox, whose pencil never falls but in dew—simple-minded as a child, gentle, and loving all things that are pure and lowly, content to be quiet among the rustling leaves, and sparkling grass, and purple-cushioned heather, only to watch the soft white clouds melting with their own motion, and the dewy blue dropping through them like rain, so that he may but cast from him as pollution all that is proud, and artificial, and unquiet, and worldly, and possess his soul in humility and peace." Cox's handling became broader in his later period, as mentioned by Ruskin in these *Notes*, and he defended the "loose and blotted handling" as appropriate to his object (*Modern Painters*, vol. i., Vol. III. pp. 193–195). For a later and less favourable notice, see *Lectures on Landscape*, § 80. See the references in Vol. III. p. 46 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

29. Gates at the Villa Sommariva,[1] Lake of Como. (*W. Evans.*[2])

The drawing cannot be called good; but there is a new idea and vision of Gates in it, and it is therefore very noteworthy. But what does Mr. Evans mean by this coarse way of work, with so much odd good, and so much odd wrong, in it? 57,[3] for instance, has a great deal of good —and the violent wrong of vertical reflections of oblique lines, which spoils all; and 10[4] is very like Vesuvius and the Apennines in winter—a very certain piece of fact—but what very remarkable and objectionable mules!

33. Highland Gillie, with Dogs and Black Game.

I suffer intense anxiety to see this remarkable gillie, who never grows old, and who has had for the last ten years of Mr. Tayler's painting him the same little portcullis of carmine on his left cheek, and the same narrow stream of liquorice down his forehead and the right side of his nose.

It is not Presidential work, Mr. Tayler[5]—you know as well as I that it is not right; and you know, better than I, how much you could do with that facile hand of yours if you chose. It seems to me you might paint dogs and ponies as well as Landseer, and Highland gillies, full of life, with real Celtic blood in their cheeks, instead of these little tartan patterns of rouge, if you would only forego for a year or two the pretty praise of the drawing-room—despise for ever the boisterous praise of the stable—and set yourself to paint veritable human nature, instead of

[1] [Now the Villa Carlotta, at Cadenabbia: see *The Poetry of Architecture* (Vol. I. p. 84).]

[2] [William Evans (1809–1858), often called "Evans of Bristol" (where he was born) to distinguish him from another water-colour painter, William Evans "of Eton" (1798–1877). He was elected an Associate of the Society in 1845.]

[3] ["Wastwater Lake, Cumberland."]

[4] ["Near Sorrento: Morning."]

[5] [Of the work of Frederick Tayler, President of the Old Water-Colour Society from 1858 to 1871, Ruskin was early an admirer: see Vol. I. p. 7, and Vol. III. p. 120; and compare *ibid.*, p. 408. See also above, p. 79.]

Digitized by Google

lay figures in tasselled caps (compare No. 132);[1] and veritable dog form and power, instead of those little yelping (they *do* yelp, certainly!) compounds of bistre-blots and flakes of white, with dots in every eye to make them glitter.

46. A Mountain Torrent, Late in Autumn. (*C. Branwhite.*)

Further carried than the artist's usual work, expressing some sufficient solidity in the rocks, and reaching some grandeur of form in the hills. But whence came the idea of painting autumn in the Highlands without a mountain ash—nay, without one dead leaf or withered fern? I assume that this scene is to be imagined in the Highlands: it very certainly *is* nowhere; but it is more like a Scottish glen than a Welsh one (entirely unlike the Alps); and if Scottish scenery is pre-eminent in anything, it is just in the gold and scarlet of the mountain ashes in early November, and in the way the dark purple rocks get studded with the dead leaves like golden byzants, the wind carrying them in whirls into their crannies, and the moist mists fastening them to the surfaces without washing them down, till every lonely crag looks like one of Veronese's purple robes embossed with gold. How it is possible for a painter to walk once through a Highland glen in autumn and miss this, I cannot conceive; nor how Mr. Branwhite, possessing some real power of drawing, can like these various conditions of scratch and dash in brown paint better than curled tops of closing fern, or than the splendid iron-russet sprays of the dead heath-blossoms, soft here and there with faint lilac, where a living bell remains.

However, slight and affected as the work is, it is firmer than last year's;[2] and we must hope better things for the future.

[1] ["Otter Hunting in the Highlands: Crossing a Ferry. From the pack of His Grace the Duke of Atholl."]

[2] [See above, p. 127.]

Digitized by Google

62. A Lingerer. (*W. Turner.*)

Not up to Mr. Turner's usual work, but the only thing I have seen this year at all like heather. 172 is, however, a very impressive and precious drawing;[1] full of truth in its far-off Highland hills, and glowing sky, and low-floating mists.

72. Sty Head Tarn, Cumberland: Early Morning. (*S. P. Jackson.*)

Very pathetic and true in its waves of mist, under sunrise, but too monotonous in colour of clouds. The rock foreground expresses faithfully the fact, too often overlooked, of a great rounded mass of slate splitting and gaping gradually under frost, giving a flat-bottomed block at the top, with a rounded back like a turtle's, and flat tabular masses in succession below, rounded on their outer edges.

112. A Winter Scene—Carting Ice. (*E. Duncan.*)

Carefully studied in some of its aerial effects; but winter mists would be enchanting indeed, if they could turn trees into knots of serpents. It is very strange that Mr. Duncan should work so conscientiously and quietly through the difficult part of his drawing, and yet not take the small pains which would have made the whole satisfactory, by sketching that tree on the left, and the pollard willow on the right, from Nature. Any tree in the world would have done; and when Mr. Duncan does draw a tree from Nature, he will find that a bough half a foot thick at the beginning of it, ramifies into more than two twigs at the end of it.

[1] ["View from Quiraing, a crater-like hollow in the hill near Steinsholl Bay, Isle of Skye."]

Digitized by Google

126. In the Sabine Hills. (*Carl Haag.*[1])

Very beautiful and right—up to the point sought. I have perhaps never before seen a piece of the Italian limestone, scorched dry in the sun, so thoroughly realized, whether in the lie of the oblique beds under the shrine, or in the mass on this side of the path spotted with black lichen. The distant mountain is very soft and lovely in colour, and quite as true as lovely. The reflected light in the roof of the shrine is rightly cast and richly glowing. What can possibly be the matter with this picture —making it not a great one—for a great one assuredly it is not?

I believe the same things are the matter with it, only in a far less painful degree, which destroys so much of the value of Carl Haag's figure pieces; namely, a delight in texture rather than in forms or undulations of surface—or (in rougher words) in the skin rather than the make of things; further, a delight in violent contrasts of colour rather than in finely invented harmonies of it (the same thing as the endeavour of a composer to get effect by passages of flute and harp after drum and trumpet, instead of by real invention of successions in chords); and lastly and chiefly, a tendency to stage sentiment rather than life sentiment, making him insist always more on costume than expression—nay, in fact, always see costume first. And, observe, this error is not merely the common one of which the Pre-Raphaelites are so often accused (for the most part falsely), of painting accessories better than principalities, when the principalities are nevertheless seen and tried for. For in Carl Haag's work the principal things are *not* seen. A peasant offers herself to his eyes as a kind of book of patterns: the main phenomena of her are her cap and

[1] [Carl Haag (*b.* 1820)—afterwards known chiefly for his Eastern drawings—a native of Bavaria, settled in England in 1847, and became an Associate of the Water-Colour Society in 1850. For an interesting notice of him, see the *History* of that Society, ii. 341–352.]

Digitized by Google

bodice; he cannot recover from the sensation of astonishment at her dress so as to discern that there is a human being within it. A man is, in his eyes, mainly different from a chamois in wearing leggings: if Cadmus had sown hobnails instead of teeth, one might have expected a crop of such men as these. I verily believe that the best thing the painter could do would be to go to the Tyrol, and himself wear green breeches and a conical hat till he got quite used to them, and perceived that there was really nothing so awful nor wonderful in either, but that he might paint without being overpowered by their presence.

He is, however, doing better every year. This landscape seems to me a great step in advance, and I hope we shall have more of the kind. Carl Haag's forte, as it has been in worsted among men, will evidently be in lichens among rocks; but that is no reason why these respectable and long-lived vegetables should not have their painters. By the way, they and the fungi have all fortune's favour this year; for William Hunt's beautiful little picture (244)[1] is the first, so far as I know, painted entirely in honour of the little ephemeral beauties, as Carl Haag's is the first which has entirely expressed the character of the black stains of mountain life which hardly change their shapes in a thousand years.

180. Lihou Island, near Guernsey. (*P. J. Naftel.*)

An excellent study of sea-shore. His "Rocquaine Bay," 53, is hung so high that it is likely to escape notice; and this would be a pity, were it but for the beauty of the subject: it is pleasant to know what lovely lanes there are in the Channel Islands, in full green in this present spring time. Rather too green, I think, here on paper. Tree shadows are more violet.

[1] [See below, pp. 203, 205.]

Digitized by Google

197. Declining Day. View in Argyllshire. (*A. P. Newton.*[1])

It is curious what compensation time and tide bring for every evil. First come railroads, to make us all restless; next come faithful painters, to draw everything so well that we needn't leave home to see it. Let Mr. Newton but draw all the four sides of Ben Nevis as he has done this one, and nobody need ever go to the mountain again for the mere sake of seeing what it is like. I know all about it, nearly, already, though I never have been near it, merely by this one drawing—quite wonderful in its expression of Scottish hill form, and very right and noble in colour. I believe it was hastily finished under heavy disadvantage, owing to an accident which happened to the painter; the foreground is therefore coarse, and I think the lower purples of the mountain may, in another such drawing, be purer and lovelier; but the expression of its shaly sides and knotted crags cannot be much bettered.

In 145 ["Entrance to the Caledonian Canal"] the mountains are also nobly drawn, but the foreground is again incomplete; the houses and other near objects look mean and small.

285. An Italian Cottage Door. (*Alfred Fripp.*[2])

All of this painter's work in the room is of exceeding interest to me, more significative of progress and more full in promise than any other; and that in three ways—in method of work, system of shade, and intention of sentiment.

[1] [Alfred Pizzey Newton (1830–1883) was elected an Associate of the Old Water-Colour Society in the year of this Exhibition, and a full member in 1879. Newton had previously made some sketches in the Highlands for Queen Victoria; he was also commissioned by her to paint a picture for a wedding gift to the Princess Royal on her marriage.]

[2] [Alfred Downing Fripp (*b.* 1822) was younger brother of George Fripp (see p. 125 *n.*). He became Associate of the Old Water-Colour Society in 1844, and member in 1846. During the years of Ruskin's *Academy Notes* Fripp lived at Rome, and his drawings were all of Italian subjects.]

Digitized by Google

In method of work it is pure and straightforward, truly *painted*—not sponged or washed; and in places completely finished. I cannot but suppose it is through mere accident and want of time that this principal subject (285) is so unequal in completion; portions of it are quite sketchy and coarse, while other portions of it even give hope that Mr. Fripp may in due time not unworthily fill some of the places which John Lewis has left vacant on the walls. I feared at first, on seeing how the face and dress of the mother were wrought, while the arbour and architecture were neglected, that Mr. Fripp had not disentangled himself from the old fallacy about generalizing subordinate parts; but I see with comfort that some subordinate parts—the cat, winking in the sun, and the pinks, for instance, on the right hand—are carried nearly to faultless completion. On the whole I think that passage nearly the best bit of painting in the room. It has no look of painful elaboration; shows no stipple or mannerism of touch; appears to be done easily as well as completely; and is quite beautiful in the conception of its pale colour in the sun. But much has to be done yet, Mr. Fripp. Our Italian mother is unsatisfactory; it is but smirking, not passionate, maternity; her gown is well drawn, but not her body; our old woman plays her part of monster too monstrously; our vines will never grow any grapes. We must have everything up to the cat's mark next year, please.

Then, in the second place, Mr. Fripp's work is progressive in its system of shade, or rather of light. That Church of St. Olivano[1] (37), which looks so strange in its paleness among all the old-fashioned water-colours about it, has had its colours carefully matched with sunshine. Only it will never do to leave hard edges and thin washes, if we are going to paint in that key. Treble notes must not be sharp and thin; the higher they are the more tender they must be, and in a certain sense the richer: it is the rich trebles

[1] [The "Maddolina" and Church of San Rocco, Olivano.]

Digitized by Google

that are sweet and precious, not the meagre ones. The paler the tone of a picture the more sweet must be its textures, and the more subtle its gradations; else it will always look like a strange half-finished sketch, not as this picture really is, a most truthful study of sunlight. What people usually suppose to be like sunlight in pictures is only like twilight or lamplight; this goes nearly as far towards Italian noonday as poor paper and colour can reach.

And, in the third but the chief place, all Mr. Fripp's pictures are well designed, their subjects being chosen with great sense of the moral force and meaning of every incident; even the small figures in this are entirely right in conception. But he has not yet enough knowledge of the figure to carry out his purposes; he is, indeed, quite in a transitional state, hesitating between landscape and figures. I think, chiefly in consequence of the way he has put in those monks of St. Olivano, that it will be quite worth his while to make the figures principal. No. 101, also, "Evening on the Abruzzi Mountains," is in idea a most beautiful picture. But of course neither the drawing of boy or dog is as yet possible to the artist; he must choose between retracting his figures into insignificance, and leaving only hills and clouds, or enabling himself, by a good hard year or two's work, to draw the figures rightly. I hope he will choose the steeper path.

244. FUNGI.[1] (*W. Hunt.*)

That we may have the pleasure of parting with words of unqualified praise, we must look last at this exquisite drawing, and therefore must glance, somewhat out of their order, at Mr. S. Palmer's "Going to India," 256,[2] which looks at first cruder and harsher than it is, but gains by a

[1] [See also No. 149 in the *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, p. 445 of this volume.]
[2] [For Samuel Palmer, see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 605 *n.*).]

Digitized by Google

long look, and has deep feeling in it; and so, taking what good there is on the screens as we pass (especially Carl Haag's "Arch at Spalatro," 288, another of the save-trouble drawings which are as good as seeing the thing itself), to Mr. Hunt's "View from Richmond Hill," 306, very notable for its air, and sunshine, and quaint expression of the contentment of the worthy English middle classes in sitting on benches beside park palings; as well as for its expression of all the ugliest and intensely characteristic qualities of our English elms, and, indeed, of our English trees generally, which always appear to me, as compared with French trees, to grow in paroxysms of *mauvaise honte*, sticking out their elbows everywhere in the wrong places, and stiffening themselves against every breeze that would bend them into grace, till all their leaves stand on end at last in sheer misery and shame at the shapes they have been got into.[1] Then to the "Peach and Grapes," 314, wherein note the wonderful light in dark of the peach's dark side, and the subtle finish of composition by help of the strawberry, whose stalk follows and relieves the curve of the round peach, and with the raised point of its green receptacle (or whatever the botanists call it) expresses its sympathy, as far as a strawberry can, with the descending curve of the bunch of grapes. Then across to 282 ["Fruit"], one of the very noblest fruit pieces which Mr. Hunt ever painted, and look well at the greengages, and the brown spots in the shadow on them. How he gets that stalk, with all its faint colour, to stand out, as it clearly does, an inch from the plums, so that but for the glass it is all but* morally certain we might lay hold of it, passes nearly all the mysteries of imitative

* Not *quite* certain—there is a shade of doubt about its tangibility—just enough to keep it in its rank of noble painting. All entirely deceptive work is bad.[2]

---

[1] [For another reference to the gracefulness of French trees, see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 238).]

[2] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 116) and *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. p. 73).]

Digitized by Google

painting I have seen. And thus, lastly, to these scarlet —no, not scarlet—nor crimson—nor in any wise speakably coloured fungi, for which, with a serious heart, I thank the painter, and with more thanks than I can give for any other picture here, as having best shown us the gracious splendour which there is in the meanest herb of the field.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

V

NOTES

ON SOME OF

THE PRINCIPAL PICTURES

EXHIBITED IN THE ROOMS OF THE

ROYAL ACADEMY

THE OLD AND NEW

SOCIETIES OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS, THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, AND THE FRENCH EXHIBITION.

No. V.—1859.

By JOHN RUSKIN, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS," "STONES OF VENICE," "SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE," "ELEMENTS OF DRAWING," ETC., ETC.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 65, CORNHILL.
1859.

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of No. V. of the *Academy Notes*, there was only one separate edition. The title-page was as shown on the preceding page. An octavo pamphlet of 56 pages. Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. 1–2; title-page (with blank reverse), pp. 3–4; preface (here p. 209), with blank reverse, pp. 5–6; text, pp. 7–56. At the foot of the last page is the imprint—"London: Printed by Smith, Elder & Co., Little Green Arbour Court, E.C." No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. Inserted at the end are twenty-four pages of advertisements of books published by Smith, Elder & Co. Issued on May 9, in green paper wrappers. On p. 1 the title-page is reproduced, enclosed in a plain double-ruled frame; with the words "*Price One Shilling*" at the foot, below; on p. 4 are advertisements of "Mr. Ruskin's Works on Art."

Reprinted (1902) in *Ruskin on Pictures*, vol. ii. pp. 173–217.

Reviews appeared in the *Economist*, May 28; the *Building News*, May 27; the *Witness*, June 13, 15; the *Literary Gazette* (of *Two Paths* also), June 4; the *Constitutional Press*, June 1859, vol. i. pp. 181–188 ("The Exhibition of the Royal Academy and Mr. Ruskin," by H. Noel Humphreys); the *Art Journal*, August 1859, N.S., vol. 5, p. 232 (as a footnote at the end of an article entitled "Ruskin *v.* Raphael").

In this edition, two misprints have been corrected; on p. 247, "Cousens" being altered to "Cozens," and on p. 251, "57" becoming "1857"; see also p. 255 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

I HOPE henceforward to do without preface; for the real state of our schools in any given year cannot be described in few words, and after the most earnest analysis of the causes of advance or decline, the real result will always be inexplicable. Great painters will every now and then appear when no one expects them; or perhaps disappear suddenly through trap-doors without any visible reason for their exit; and the critic can only congratulate in simplicity, or lament in amazement. The present Exhibition shows steady advance among the younger students; the more experienced masters, whether Academic or Pre-Raphaelite, are either absent or indolent; but I have never seen the Academy walls show so high an average of good work.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY

12. Reminiscences of the Ball. (*G. D. Leslie.*[1])

It must be a great delight to Mr. Leslie to see his son do such good work as this. There is not a prettier little piece of painting on the walls, and very few half so pretty. All the accessories, too, are at once quaint and graceful, showing an enjoyment of elegance in form (even down to the design of the frame of the picture, and the bars of the chair) which is very rare among the young painters of the rising school. This grace of fancy is shown no less in the little Chinese subject by the same artist (851, "Kin-le-Chaon"), which, however, is not quite so thoroughly painted. I shall look anxiously for Mr. Leslie's work next year, for he seems to have truly the power of composition, and that is the gift of gifts if it be rightly used.[2] He colours very well already.

18. A Boy in Florentine Costume. (*Mrs. J. B. Hay.*)

Very masterly and complete in effect, and like the Val d'Arno; so also its companion, No. 173.[3] But the intention of this latter is mistaken. An English boy, however

[1] [Mr. George Dunlop Leslie (*b.* 1835), youngest son of C. R. Leslie, R.A., was elected A.R.A. in 1868, and R.A. in 1876.]

[2] [On this subject compare Vol. XII. p. 387.]

[3] ["England and Italy. Painted in the Val d'Arno, 1859." In a note in the catalogue the artist explains her intention: "Two boys, one of English type, the other an Italian boy of the people. In one I have endeavoured to express the pure happiness of our children; in the other, the obstination (*sic*) of the oppressed and suffering poor of Italy."]

Digitized by Google

luxuriously bred, has usually twenty times the firmness in his face that an Italian one has. Italian boys are beautiful —full of vitality and roguery; lazy, and, on the whole, well fed, wherever I have seen them. There is more misery of an outward and physical kind in a couple of London back-streets than in a whole Italian town. Mental degradation, not physical suffering, constitutes the slavery of Italy; both constitute that of England. Italian slavery is infinitely grander than ours. The souls of Italy at least need iron bars to bind them; ours need only the threads of purses.

15. THE VALE OF REST.[1] (*J. E. Millais, A.*)

I have no doubt the beholder is considerably offended at first sight of this picture—justifiably so, considering what might once have been hoped for from its painter; but unjustifiably, if the offence taken prevents his staying by it, for it deserves his study. "We are offended by it." Granted. Perhaps the painter did not mean us to be pleased. It may be that he supposed we should have been offended if we had seen the real nun digging her real grave;* that she and it might have appeared to us not altogether pathetic, romantic, or sublime, but only strange or horrible; and that he chooses to fasten this sensation upon us rather than any other.

It is a temper into which many a good painter has fallen before now. You would not find it a pleasant thing to be left at twilight in the church of the Madonna of the Garden at Venice, with the last light falling on the skeletons—half alive, dreamy, stammering skeletons—shaking

* I believe, in point of fact, nuns neither dig their own graves nor erect tombstones; but we will take the picture on its own terms.

[1] ["Where the weary find repose" (see Job iii. 17) was added in the catalogue as a motto. This picture is now in the Tate Gallery (No. 1507). The *Athenæum* (April 30, 1859) had referred to the unpleasantness of "the red skull of a face and staring coarse black eyes" in the nun. "Year Mr. Millais gave forth those terrible nuns in the graveyard"—thus did *Punch* characterise 1859. In 1862 Millais re-painted the head of the seated nun. For various particulars about the picture, see E. T. Cook's *Popular Handbook to the National Gallery* (British schools).]

Digitized by Google

the dust off their ribs, in Tintoret's "Last Judgment."[1] Perhaps even you might not be at your ease before one or two pale crucifixes which I remember of Giotto's and other not mean men, where the dark red runlets twine and trickle from the feet down to the skull at the root of the cross.[2] Many an ugly spectre and ghastly face has been painted by the gloomier German workmen before now, and been in some sort approved by us; nay, there is more horror by far, of a certain kind, in modern French works—Vernet's Eylau and Plague,[3] and such like—which we do not hear any one declaim against; nay, which seem to meet a large division of public taste—than in this picture which so many people call "frightful."

Why *so* frightful? Is it not because it is so nearly beautiful?—Because the dark green field, and windless trees, and purple sky might be so lovely to persons unconcerned about their graves?

Or is it that the faces are so ugly? You would have liked them better to be fair faces, such as would grace a drawing-room; and the grave to be dug in prettier ground —under a rose-bush or willow, and in turf set with violets —nothing like a bone visible as one threw the mould out. So, it would have been a sweet piece of convent sentiment.

I am afraid that it is a good deal more like real convent sentiment as it is. Death—confessed for king before his time—asserts, so far as I have seen, some authority over such places; either unperceived, and then the worst, in drowsy unquickening of the soul; or felt and terrible, pouring out his white ashes upon the heart — ashes that burn with cold. If you think what the kind of persons who have strength of conviction enough to give up the world might have done for the world had they *not* given it up; and how the King of Terror must rejoice when he wins for himself another soul that might have gone forth

[1] [This is the picture described in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 274–277).]

[2] [The MS. shows that Ruskin first wrote "foot" of the cross, altering the word afterwards to "root."]

[3] [For Horace Vernet, see Vol. V. pp. 124 *n.*, 126. Many of his battle pictures are at Versailles, but the editors have been unable to trace the Eylau and Plague.]

Digitized by Google

to calm the earth, and folds his wide white wings over it for ever (He also gathering his children together);[1] and how those white sarcophagi, towered and belfried, each with his companies of living dead, gleam still so multitudinous among the mountain pyramids of the fairest countries of the earth —places of silence for their sweet voices; places of binding for their faithfullest hands; places of fading for their mightiest intelligences;—you may, perhaps, feel also that so great wrong cannot be lovely in the near aspect of it; and that if this very day, at evening, we were allowed to see what the last clouds of twilight glow upon in some convent garden of the Apennines, we might leave the place with some such horror as this picture will leave upon us; not all of it noble horror, but in some sort repulsive and ignoble.

It is, for these reasons, to me, a great work. Nevertheless, part of its power is not to the painter's praise. The crude painting is here in a kind of harmony with the expression of discord which was needed. But it is crude—not in momentary compliance with the mood which prompted this wild design, but in apparent consistency of decline from the artist's earlier ways of labour.

Pass to his other picture—the "Spring"[2]—and we find the colour not less abrupt, though more vivid. And when we look at this fierce and rigid orchard—this angry blooming (petals, as it were, of japanned brass); and remember the lovely wild roses and flowers scattered on the stream in the "Ophelia";[3] there is, I regret to say, no ground for any diminution of the doubt which I expressed two years since[4] respecting the future career of a painter who can fall thus strangely beneath himself.

[1] [See Matthew xxiii. 37.]

[2] [No. 298. This picture, better known under the title "Apple Blossoms," is now in the possession of Mr. Clarke. The central figure was painted from Miss Georgiana Moncrieff (afterwards Countess of Dudley). The history of the picture—"the most unfortunate of Millais's pictures," Lady Millais called it—is given in his *Life and Letters*, i. 323.]

[3] [Exhibited at the Academy in 1852. For other references to it, see above, p. 107, and below, p. 496 *n.*]

[4] [See above, p. 107.]

Digitized by Google

of discord which was needed: But it is coarse
and crude - not ~~from~~ in momentary compliance with
the mood which prompted this wild design -
but in apparent consistency of decline from
the artists ~~ancient~~ earlier ways of labour.
Pass to his other picture - the Spring.

A PAGE OF THE MS. OF "ACADEMY NOTES," 1859

pp. 214-215

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The power has not yet left him. With all its faults, and they are grievous, this is still mighty painting: nothing else is as strong, or approximately as strong, within these walls. But it is a phenomenon, so far as I know, unparalleled hitherto in art history, that any workman capable of so much should rest content with so little. All former art, by men of any intellect, has been wrought, under whatever limitations of time, as well as the painter could do it; evidently with an effort to reach something beyond what was actually done: if a sketch, the sketch showed a straining towards completion; if a picture, it showed a straining to a higher perfection. But here, we have a careless and insolent indication of things that might be; not the splendid promise of a grand impatience, but the scrabbled remnant of a scornfully abandoned aim.

And this wildness of execution is strangely associated with the distortion of feature which more or less has been sought for by this painter from his earliest youth; just as it was by Martin Schöngauer[1] and Mantegna. In the first picture (from Keats's "Isabella") which attracted public attention, the figure in the foreground writhed in violence of constrained rage; in the picture of the "Holy Family at Nazareth" the Virgin's features were contorted in sorrow over a wounded hand; violent ugliness of feature spoiled a beautiful arrangement of colour in the "Return of the Dove," and disturbed a powerful piece of dramatic effect in the "Escape from the Inquisition."[2] And in this present picture, the unsightliness of some of the faces, and the preternatural grimness of others, with the fierce colour and angular masses of the flowers above, force upon me a strange impression, which I cannot shake off—that this is

[1] [See Vol. VI. p. 400.]

[2] ["Lorenzo and Isabella" (1848) is now in the Corporation Gallery at Liverpool. For the "Holy Family at Nazareth," otherwise known as "Christ in the House of His Parents" (1849) and "The Return of the Dove to the Ark" (1851), see Vol. XII. pp. 320, 323. For "The Escape of a Heretic" (1857), see above, p. 110. Ruskin had called attention to the point noticed above in his second letter to the *Times* on "The Pre-Raphaelite Brethren," Vol. XII. p. 325.]

Digitized by Google

an illustration of the song of some modern Dante, who, at the first entrance of an Inferno for English society, had found, carpeted with ghostly grass, a field of penance for young ladies, where girl-blossoms, who had been vainly gay, or treacherously amiable, were condemned to recline in reprobation under red-hot apple blossom, and sip scalding milk out of a poisoned porringer.

40. THE NIGHT BEFORE NASEBY. (*A. L. Egg, A.*)

An interesting contribution to the store of hints for better understanding of English history which painters and poets are now continually throwing out for us. This scene is, however, hardly strange enough to have the look of reality: it is what we should, or could, all imagine about Cromwell; while most likely, if we had really been able to look into his tent the night before Naseby, the look of him would have been something different from what we should have imagined. A picture which is not at first a little wonderful to us, can hardly at last be true to us.

63. A HUFF. (*J. Phillip, A.*)

Full of powerful and dexterous painting; but ungraceful, and slightly vulgar. This last character is given chiefly by the brilliancy of petticoat and chenille, prevailing at once over passions, faces, and landscape. It is, indeed, quite right to elaborate details; but not the ignoblest details first and best. All! or none. If chenille—then, *à fortiori*, orange bough and blossom; if blue petticoat—*à fortiori*, blue sky. The orange tree, it might be said, would have spoiled the faces if it had been made out. Then put something behind them that will not spoil them; but always paint it well, whatever it is.

Digitized by Google

95. THE LATE CAPTAIN SIR CHARLES HOTHAM.[1] (*G. Richmond, A.*)

This is a very noble portrait; full of simple and manly character, vigorous and complete in workmanship: but all the best of it is here lost, and what deficiency exists in its dark colour brought out, both by its height above the eye, and by the neighbourhood of the white dresses in the portraits beneath it; and thus a great injustice is done to the painter, and a real loss (for it is a serious one not to see this admirably wrought head better) caused to the public, merely for the sake of the symmetries of the saloon—that a diagonal line of general in No. 95 may balance a diagonal line of lady in No 69.[2] In the Louvre, at this moment, the French use their best old pictures, the treasures of Europe, in the same way, and hang Titian's and Rubens's portraits to balance each other, forty feet above the eye. Such treatment of great pictures is simply, and in the full sense of the word, "savage"; such things cannot be done, whether by us here, or by the French in the Louvre, but in a clownish ignorance of the meaning of the word "picture," and of the entire value and purpose of painting. And, indeed, when the pictures are wholly precious and perfect, like the Titian with the red-capped St. Joseph, which the French have hung high out of sight in the Louvre,[3] or like the Sir Joshua's "Holy Family," which we have thrust into the darkest room in Marlborough House,[4] "clownish" is not a strong enough word for the mischief; "savage" is the accurate expression. A clown buys ornaments for his cottage chimney-piece, without much understanding of their merit as

[1] [Sir Charles Hotham, R.N., K.C.B. (1800–1855), was Governor of the colony of Victoria (1854–1855): this portrait was painted for presentation to the corporation of the city of Melbourne.]

[2] ["The Countess della Torre," by R. Buckner.]

[3] [For Ruskin's criticism of the hanging of the picture at the Louvre at this time, see "Notes on the Louvre" (Vol. XII. pp. 448 *seq.*), and Vol. XIII. p. 544.]

[4] [The "Holy Family" (No. 78) is now a wreck, owing to Sir Joshua's unfortunate experiments with his pigments; it has for many years been withdrawn from exhibition.]

Digitized by Google

works of art; but at least he puts them where he can see them. But your savage, to whom, after much polite and instructive conversation about England, thinking to deepen the impression on his mind, you make a present of miniatures of the Queen and Prince Albert, presently attaches the Queen to one ear and Prince Albert to the other, and dances round you with a howl. We two great nations, French and English, "wear" our noble pictures precisely in this manner.

It is to be hoped that in the arrangement of the building about to be raised for the occupation of the Academy,[1] the fact may be at last acknowledged that a picture which is worth seeing at all is worth seeing well;[2] that a picture gallery needs space, but not height—and rational sequence, not overwhelming concentration, of its treasures.

The portrait of the Dean of Westminster,[3] No. 510, shows Mr. Richmond's power more satisfactorily.

113. Clarkson Stanfield, Esq., R.A. (*D. Macnee.*[4])

A good portrait;[5] only Mr. Stanfield's eyes are more piercing, even in general, and must be especially so when he is sketching. And surely the portrait of a landscape painter ought to have a background. Velasquez always allows his admirals a little sea; might not Mr. Stanfield have had at least a rock and a wave?

185. Waiting for the Ferry-Boat — Upper Egypt. (*J. F. Lewis, A.*)

Well, of course, it is very nice. Housings and camels—palm trees—clouds, and sheikh. But waiting for a ferry-boat

[1] [The present Burlington House.]
[2] [Compare on this subject, Vol. XIII. pp. 402, 410.]
[3] [R. C. Trench, Dean of Westminster, 1856–1863; Archbishop of Dublin, 1864–1884.]
[4] [Sir David Macnee (1806–1882), portrait-painter, was elected a member of the Royal Scottish Academy in 1829. He became its President in 1876, and was knighted.]
[5] [Painted for the Portrait Gallery of the Royal Scottish Academy.]

Digitized by Google

is dull work; and are we never to get out of Egypt any more? nor to perceive the existence of any living creatures but Arabs and camels? Is there nothing paintable in England, nor Spain, nor Italy?[1] Or, in the East, if we *must* live in the East, is no landscape ever visible but a dead level of mud raised two feet above a slow stream? I have heard of lovely hills and convents at Athos—of green trees and flowing waters at Damascus—of mighty rocks at Petra and Mount Hor—of wonderful turrets and enamelled walls at Cairo: surely the mosaic of a marble turret is as pretty a thing to paint as a camel-housing; and it would take no more trouble to draw the ridges of an Arabian mountain than the folds of that everlasting sheik's cloak! We go to this melancholy Egypt through plague, and mosquitoes, and misery of every sort—and all we see for our pains is a camel with a fine carpet on his back. Cannot we see that any day at the Zoological Gardens? But the Sphinx, and the temples, and the hieroglyphics, and the mirage, and simoom, and everything that we want to know about, and that one would be so thankful to have painted properly—shall we never have any of these? It is too unkind of you, Mr. Lewis; and it serves you quite right to be put up there, where nobody can see a bit of your good work, but only your dull subject. But what is this we have got put underneath you, which looks like a tobacconist's sign? a valuable work, it is to be hoped—let us see.

137. THE FUSEE. (*A. Cooper, R.A.*[2])

The sublime of English art, truly! A lake, with ingenious white touches at the edges, to mark it from the mountains;

[1] [Ruskin particularly regretted that Lewis did not devote himself to Venice. "I would give anything," he wrote to his father from Venice (September 16, 1851), "if John Lewis would come; he is the only man who could draw it, and he would do it *perfectly*." Compare another letter already given above, p. 167 *n*.]

[2] [Abraham Cooper (1787–1868) was elected A.R.A. in 1817 and R.A. in 1820. In the year of this Exhibition he was seventy-two. His works were mostly of sporting subjects. Two small pictures by him, of the year 1818, are in the South Kensington Museum.]

Digitized by Google

some rocks of leather; sky-blue heather; wooden-headed people, displaying themselves in the athletic exercise of smoking; and a pool of water, with vertical reflections of sloping lines! A superb art lesson for the line of the Academy—heroic and optical at once. It is interesting, especially, to see that, in the present state of British science, one may write R.A. after one's name, yet not be able to paint a gutter.

160. The Church of Sta. Maria della Salute. (*D. Roberts, R.A.*)

My dear Mr. Roberts, *is* this like a church built of white Carrara marble? La Salute is verily as white as snow in some places; black-spotted or ochre-spotted in others; but delicate and lovely everywhere. And then the gondoliers! still always where they couldn't possibly row! It would be very comfortable for gondoliers if they might stand in the middle of the boat close by the canopy; but to their sorrow, sometimes to their misfortune, they must stand far back, poised on the point of the giddy stern. I say "sometimes to their misfortune"; for, as if specially to illustrate Mr. Leslie's* declaration, in defence of Canaletti against some fault-finding of mine, that the water, "as it approached the houses, was sheltered from the breeze," my strongest gondolier was blown off his perch into the canal at my own door one day, just opposite this very church, and had nearly been brained against the doorstep.[1]

I much regret Mr. Roberts's abandonment of his old picturesque subjects for these severe ones. He had a great gift of expressing the ins and outs of Spanish balconies and roofs, and the hollow work of complex tracery; and all

* *Handbook for Young Painters*, p. 269.[2]

[1] [Ruskin refers again to this incident in a letter to Professor Charles Eliot Norton: see Vol. IX. p. xxviii.]

[2] [Compare p. 168, above. Leslie's reference was to *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. ii. sec. v. ch. i. § 18: see Vol. III. p. 513, where, in a note added to this edition, the passage in the *Handbook* is cited.]

Digitized by Google

his skill of this kind is now passing away into formal architectural drawing in brown and grey. His old painting of the spires of Burgos Cathedral[1]—of its turreted chapter-house—the tombs of Ferdinand and Isabella—the towers and courts of the Alhambra, etc., involved points of interest and displays of skill which none of his subjects at present either contain or admit; while their generally smaller size prevented the painter's wearying at his work, and enabled us to have five or six subjects each year instead of two.

165. MARY MAGDALENE.[2] (*J. R. Herbert, R.A.*)

Very beautiful, and an interesting example of the noble tendency of modern religious art to conceive scenes as they really in probability occurred; not in merely artistic modification or adaptation.

The picture tells its story sufficiently, and needs no comment. It is not of high artistic merit, but a sincere and gentle conception, adequately, and therefore very touchingly, expressed.

167. "JUST AS THE TWIG IS BENT, THE TREE'S INCLINED." (*W. Mulready, R.A.*)

I see that this picture has been depreciatingly spoken of in several of the journals. I think unjustly so. It is as good as Mr. Mulready's work usually is. I had occasion last year[3] to point out the general defect of that work—namely, that the painter is evidently thinking only of himself and his drawing—never caring the least about what he has to draw; of which, therefore, he misses precisely the most valuable characters, and succeeds in using more

[1] [See in the national collection the picture of "The Cathedral at Burgos" (No. 400 in the Tate Gallery), painted in 1835.]

[2] [Study for part of a picture of the holy women passing at daybreak over the place of crucifixion.]

[3] [In 1857, not 1858: see above, p. 101.]

Digitized by Google

skill in painting Nothing than any painter ever spent before on that subject.

If the trees in the background are supposed to be typical of education, they ought to have been better grown. Mr. Mulready's trees are often supposed by artists to be well drawn, merely because they are well *rounded*. But they are, nevertheless, mannered in execution, and false in tree anatomy.

190. Barley Harvest on the Welsh Coast. (*C. P. Knight.*[1])

A delightful subject, forcibly, because harmoniously, rendered, though without any subtlety of execution. I am glad to observe how much the public enjoy a piece of plain fact like this, plainly told; and how they rejoice in their gradual discovery that ground may be golden and sea blue, no less than brown and grey.

211. Jeanie Deans and Queen Caroline. (*C. R. Leslie, R.A.*)

The more I learn of art, the more respect I feel for Mr. Leslie's painting, as such; and for the way it brings out the expressional result he requires. Given a certain quantity of oil colour to be laid with one touch of pencil, so as to produce at once the subtlest and largest expressional result possible, and there is no man now living who seems to me to come at all near Mr. Leslie, his work being, in places, equal to Hogarth[2] for decision, and here and there a little lighter and more graceful (Hogarth always laying his colour somewhat in daubs and spots). But I am obliged to write above, "the result he (Mr. Leslie) requires," as being very completely distinguished from the result that

[1] [Charles Parsons Knight (1829–1897), landscape and marine painter, first exhibited at the Academy in 1857, and frequently afterwards there and at the Society of British Artists. His drawings made special study of cloud forms and sea effects.]

[2] [For Ruskin's references to Hogarth, see Vol. XII. p. 495.]

Digitized by Google

other people might possibly require. So long, indeed, as Mr. Leslie is dealing only with delicate, lady-like, or gentleman-like expression, he is a consummately faithful artist. I cannot help referring once more[1] to his exquisite Belinda and her lover, in his "Rape of the Lock," as types of all that can be asked in such painting; and in this picture before us, the Queen, and still more the dark-robed Lady Suffolk, are quite beautiful; as also in No. 152,[2] Lady Percy. But Jeanie here! and Harry there!! Alas, the day! Examine the two pictures well: they are among the most instructive that ever yet appeared on the Academy walls, in showing the possibility of entering completely into the spirit of the gracefulnesses of society, without the power of conceiving Heroism. To a certain extent, the mind of Reynolds was of this stamp. He could conceive a most refined lord or lady, but not a saint or Madonna; and his best hero, Lord Heathfield,[3] is but an obstinate old English gentleman after all.

Gainsborough takes very nearly the same view of us.[4] Hogarth laughs at or condemns us. Leslie, accustomed to high English life, supposes that this was Harry Percy's way of wearing his spurs. Is it not a rather strange matter that our seers, or painters, contemplating the English nation, cannot, all of them put together, paint an English hero? Nothing more than an English gentleman in an obstinate state of mind about keys; with an expression which I can conceive so exceedingly stout a gentleman of that age as occasionally putting on, even respecting the keys of the cellaret. Pray, consider of it a little, good visitors to the Royal Academy in the afternoon, whether it is altogether the painter's fault, or anybody else's!

[1] [See above, p. 38.]

[2] ["Hotspur and Lady Percy." *First Part of Henry IV.*, Act ii. sc. 3.]

[3] [No. 111 in the National Gallery. For Reynolds's limitations in the sense here indicated, see the paper on "Sir Joshua and Holbein" (*On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. §§ 152–153), reprinted in a later volume of this edition. On the modern types of Madonnas, see the ironical reference in *Mornings in Florence*, § 34.]

[4] [For other references to Gainsborough in this connexion, see *Ariadne Florentina*, § 48, and "Sir Joshua and Holbein," § 153.]

Digitized by Google

237. A Maltese Xebec on the Rocks of Procida.[1] (*C. Stanfield, R.A.*)

It is rather singular that the castle of Ischia, which appears in the distance of this picture, is almost the only piece of really picturesque architecture which is to be found on the Academy walls this year.

It is not, perhaps, one of Mr. Stanfield's best works, but his mountain forms are always true and bold; and after infinite and infinitesimal calls upon one's sympathy from leaves and dragon-flies, one is glad of a piece of solid rock and wall, about which one is not expected to "feel" anything particular.

310. Sunday in the Backwoods.[2] (*T. Faed.*)

This will of course be a very popular picture, and deserves to be so, having every claim to our observance which kindly feeling and steady average painting can give it. It does not possess any first-rate qualities; but has no serious faults, and much gentle pathos. The figure of the healthy sister, looking up, seems to me the best.

316. The Rose Garland. (*W. C. T. Dobson.*)

Evidently a most faithful portrait (colour only excepted) of a dear, good little girl—such an one as may be seen often enough, Heaven be praised! at cottage doors in England, or in France, or in Germany, or in Switzerland, or, I suppose, in Sweden. South of the Alps or Pyrenees, or east of the

[1] [A steam-tug and Neapolitan boats rendering assistance. The island and castle of Ischia in the distance.]

[2] [In the catalogue an explanatory "Extract from a letter from Canada" was given: "We have no church here but our loghouse, or the wide forest; and a grand kirk the forest makes—not even the auld cathedral has such pillars, space, nor so high a roof; so we e'en take turns about on Sunday in reading the Bible. We are all well except Jeannie, and as happy as can be, considering the country and ties we have left. Poor Jeannie is sadly changed; her only song now is, 'Why left I my hame?' But for her illness, our lot ought not to be an unhappy one."]

Digitized by Google

Carpathians, one finds that kind of face no more. What does that peculiar northern sweetness consist in, which never showed itself, even to Giotto, nor to Raphael? their beauty being of another kind wholly—more pensive, less wise, and less active.

329. Felice Ballarin reciting "Tasso" to the People of Chioggia. (*F. Goodall, A.*[1])

This is a great advance beyond all Mr. Goodall's former work. It is entirely higher in aim, and deeper in rendering of character; the subject interesting; the faces, for the most part, evidently portraits, and good portraits (especially those dark ones of the men in the background); the colour, in some separate portions, rich and good, showing qualities which never before appeared to be in the least sought for, much less reached, by the painter. In fact, Mr. Goodall has been looking at Titian instead of Wilkie, and that makes a large difference in what will be got by looking.

Nevertheless the picture is far from right yet; and its failure involves an important principle, which it may be of use to state generally, at a time when nearly all our younger painters are making those vigorous efforts in new directions. It is wholly impossible to paint an effect of sunlight truly. It never has been done, and never will be. Sunshine is brighter than any mortal can paint, and all resemblances to it must be obtained by sacrifice. In order to obtain a popularly effective sunlight, colour must be sacrificed. De Hoogh, Cuyp, Claude, Both, Richard Wilson, and all other masters of sunshine, invariably reach their most telling

[1] [Frederick Goodall (1822–1904) first exhibited at the Academy in 1839. He was elected A.R.A. in 1853 and R.A. in 1863. For earlier references to him, see Vol. III. p. 326 *n*. In later years he was best known for his Eastern landscapes, of which a characteristic specimen is in the Tate Gallery (No. 1562). The subject of the picture noticed above was taken from the artist's own observation. "Felice Ballarin," he wrote, "was the name of the reciter. He was a native of Chioggia, but above the peasant class. It was a constant feast to me to watch the earnest expressions of the people who listened to his recitations. I always had my sketching pocket-book at hand to put down their attitudes and expressions." (Editor's note in *Ruskin on Pictures*.)]

Digitized by Google

effects by harmonies of gold with grey, giving up the blues, rubies, and freshest greens. Turner did the same in his earlier work. Modern Pre-Raphaelites, and Turner in his later work, reached magnificent effects of sunshine colour, but of a kind necessarily unintelligible to the ordinary observer (as true sunshine colour will always be, since it is impossible to paint it of the pitch of light which has true relation to its shadows). And thus the "Sun of Venice," and the "Slave Ship," with Hunt's "Two Gentlemen of Verona," "Stray Sheep," and such others, failed of almost all their due effect on the popular mind.[1]

In landscape, nevertheless, to which sunshine is often necessary as part of its expression, the sacrifice must be made; and the public will, in time, understand it. But in figures, sunshine is rarely a necessary part of the expression; and all figure pictures in which it is introduced must be, to a certain extent, offensive. The obstinate endeavours of the Pre-Raphaelites to get vermilion transparencies and purple shadows into flesh, have been one of the principal and most justifiable grounds of the long opposition to them. And all great work whatsoever, of the highest school, refuses sunlight; and admits only a kind of glowing twilight, like that of Italy a quarter of an hour after sunset.

Under these circumstances, choice must be made firmly and completely. Give up your sunlight, and you may get Titian's twilight. Give up your Titianesque depth, and you may, by thorough study from Nature, get some approximation to noonday flame. But you cannot have both. Mr. Goodall has attempted both, and, of course, missed both—chiefly his sunshine, from mere inattention to its effects. For instance, the woman sitting on the right, with the green petticoat, has her lap in sunshine, her head in shade. Whatever light touches the head would be reflected light, and it

[1] [For the "Sun of Venice," No. 535 in the National Gallery, see Vol. XIII. p. 163. For references to the "Slaver," once in Ruskin's collection, see Vol. III. p. 571. To the "splendour of colour" in Holman Hunt's "Two Gentlemen of Verona," Ruskin had called attention in his letter to the *Times* of May 30, 1851, Vol. XII. p. 324. For "The Strayed Sheep," see above, p. 65.]

Digitized by Google

would be reflected from the ground, shining strongly under her brows and on the lower part of her face; instead of which there is a shadow under the brow, exactly as if she were sitting in a room with ordinary daylight entering from above through a window. The picture is full of grammatical error of the same kind—the kind of error which in these days of earnest effort and accurate science, artists should get quit of with their long-clothes and spelling-books; whereas now, to the middle or even the close of life, they remain encumbered among petty misunderstandings, and wondering why they cannot make their art beautiful, when they have never taken the pains to make it right. There are, of course, just three simple stages of study to be gone through by every student. He has first to learn to draw a solid body in perfect light and shade, without sunlight. Then to paint it, also without sunlight; taking subjects that will give no trouble about their expression or sentiment. Then to put it into sunshine, and paint it there also, until he knows precisely the kind of difference in treatment required for it. And then—not till then—he may be able partially to colour the human face.

All this is just as simple and rational in method of procedure as practising scales in music before we try to play sonatas. But we always try to learn our painting upside down.

368. THE EVENING SONG. (*A. Rankley.*[1])

A pretty thought, but not well enough painted. The sky has been caught from Nature; but with too little precision, the perspective of the retiring ranks of cloud being missed.

Are our village children taught at present to sing the evening hymn in such an obstreperous manner as to frighten the geese?

[1] [Alfred Rankley (1819–1872), whose work first appeared at the Academy in 1841, was a constant exhibitor of pictures of domestic genre.]

Digitized by Google

869. LUFF, BOY! (*J. C. Hook, A.*)

War with France? It may be; and they say good ships are building at Cherbourg. War with Russia? That also is conceivable;[1] and the Russians invent machines that explode under water by means of knobs. War with the fiend in ourselves? That may not so easily come to pass, he and we being in close treaty hitherto, yet perhaps in good time may be looked for. And against enemies, foreign or internal, French, Sclavonic, or demoniac, what arms have we to count upon? I hear of good artillery practice at Woolwich; of new methods of sharpening sabres invented by Sikhs; of a modern condition of the blood of Nessus, which sets sails on fire, and makes an end of herculean ships,[2] like phœnixes. All which may perhaps be well, or perhaps ill, for us. But if our enemies want to judge of our proved weapons and armour, let them come and look here. Bare head, bare fist, bare foot, and blue jacket! If these will not save us, nothing will!

A glorious picture—most glorious!—"Hempen bridle, and horse of tree."[3] Nay, rather, backs of the blue horses, foam-fetlocked, rearing beside us as we ride, tossing their tameless crests, with deep-drawn thunder in their overtaking tread. I wonder if Mr. Hook when he drew that boy thought of the Elgin Marbles;[4] the helmetless, unsworded, unarmoured men of Marathon. I think not; the likeness is too lovely to be conscious: it is all the more touching. They also, the men of Marathon, horsemen riding upon

[1] [The state of public feeling at this time, with its fear of foreign complications, is shown in Tennyson's lines "Riflemen, Form!" which appeared in the *Times* of May 9, 1859.]

[2] [The reference is apparently to various experiments in the manufacture of explosives—some of them on the lines of "Greek Fire"—which were in progress at this time. For the shirt of Nessus, which was pierced by a poisoned arrow and thus acquired the deadly charm that was destined to make an end of Hercules, see Sophocles, *Trach.*, 740 *seq.*

[3] [Compare *Harbours of England*, § 42, Vol. XIII. p. 49.]

[4] ["Finding," says Mr. Hook's biographer, "his best models in the Elgin Marbles, he studied them diligently and heartily, and from them gained not a little of that sense of style, love of simplicity, largeness and breadth of design, and that reliance on thoroughness, which characterize the best art of all kinds, and have always distinguished his pictures."—F. G. Stephens, *J. C. Hook: His Life and Work*, p. 4.]

Digitized by Google

horses, given them of the Sea God. The earth struck by the trident takes such shape—a white wave, with its foaming mane and its crested head, made living for them.

And the quiet steersman, too, with his young brow knit, to whom father and brother are trusted—and more than they. I would we had such faithful arms, however feeble, at all helms.

Infinite thanks, Mr. Hook, for this; for our "Brook of Human Life" also (250), and our "Hours of Listless Sway on Gentle Wave" (493). All of them beautiful. The distant landscape in that brook scene is one of the sweetest ever found by painter—for found it evidently is, not composed; as well as Mr. Redgrave's beautiful distance in 218.[1]

390. Barley Harvest. (*H. C. Whaite.*[2])

Very exquisite in nearly every respect; perhaps, take it all in all, the most covetable bit of landscape of this year, and showing good promise, it seems to me, if the painter does not overwork himself needlessly. The execution of the whole by minute and similar touches is a mistake. Certain textures need to be so produced, and certain complexities of form; but the work is never good unless it varies with every part of the subject, and is different in method, according to the sort of surface or form required. Nothing finished can be done without labour; but a picture can hardly be more injured than by the quantity of labour

[1] [No. 250 was described in the catalogue by Tennyson's lines from *The Brook*:—

"And out again I curve and flow,
To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on for ever."

"A cart with an old man and a young man in it is entering the shallow stream which is spanned by a rustic wooden bridge. Over this a young woman passes, caressing a baby; while, leaning on a handrail, a country boy is talking to the young man. The moral of the design is distinct, and could not but give significance of those earthly shows of beauty which, although men may come and men may go, are for ever renewed" (F. G. Stephens, *Monograph on J. C. Hook*, p. 22). No. 493 was entitled "The Skipper Ashore." No. 218, by R. Redgrave, R.A., was "The Emigrant's Last Sight of Home."]

[2] [H. Clarence Whaite, now member of the Royal Water-Colour Society, and President of the Royal Cambrian Academy.]

Digitized by Google

in it which is lost. Uncontributive toil is one of the forms of ruin.

Mr. Whaite's drawing, 1001 ["Snowdon"], is also very lovely in conception, and right in form of cloud. It is slightly affected by the same error as the oil-painting. Compare with it the interesting study opposite, by Mr. A. W. Hunt (997. "On the Greta"), entirely well meant, but suffering under the same oppression of plethoric labour. I do not often, in the present state of the English school, think it advisable to recommend "breadth"; but assuredly both Mr. Whaite and Mr. Hunt, if they wish to do themselves justice, ought to give up colour for a little while, and work with nothing but very ill-made charcoal which will not cut to a point.

While we are examining these minor landscapes, it is worth while returning to the west room to glance at Mr. J. S. Raven's "Saintfoin in Bloom" (574), which is more easy in touch, and very harmonious in the light and shade of the figures;[1] and at Mr. Oakes's richly but vainly wrought foreground, with nothing beyond it. (525. "Marchllyn-Mawr: 'A solitary Pool, fringed round with rushes wild.'")

Mr. Boyce's "The East Lynn at Middleham" (682) is of higher temper. It is curious how few people seem to feel the solemn difference between sun and shade—in the breadth of both, which he has endeavoured to render there. Many other studies of great interest may be found scattered on the walls, in which, while there is much to be admired, this is generally to be regretted, that the painters, not being able to do their work entirely well, think to make progress by doing a great quantity of work moderately well, which will by no means answer the purpose. We cannot learn to paint leaves by painting trees-full, nor grass by painting fields-full. Learning to paint one leaf rightly is better than constructing a whole forest of leaf definitions.

[1] [John Samuel Raven (1829–1877), exhibited at the Academy from 1849. He was strongly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite movement, his later works being characterised by elaboration of detail and strong poetical feeling. An exhibition of his works was held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1878.]

Digitized by Google

441. God's Gothic. (*Miss A. Blunden.*)

An entirely earnest and very notable study. It looks hard at first (and indeed *is* a little hard at last), but the appearance of too conspicuous green in the sea, which principally causes the harshness, will be found to diminish after a steady look; the fact being that the sea is often of this colour, only the bright sunlight of Nature, which no painting can equal, accounts for it to our sensations. But if Miss Blunden can make her handling a little more tender, the colour may be as bright without looking wrong. She has tried hard, not without fair success, to express the rise of the wave—hardly visible in the long swell—till the foam shows at its edge; the wet shingle is also very good; the boat well drawn; and the beds of pointed "Gothic" wonderfully true in bend, as well as various in colour.

480. The Burgesses of Calais. (*H. Holiday.*)

A well-conceived and interesting scene:[1] the face of the knight successful; that of the wife is a little beyond the painter's strength. It is a fair representation of the class of pictures now produced in numbers by the advancing school, which, with considerable merit, have the general demerit of making us feel in an instant that they would never have been painted had not others shown how; and the greater demerit of slightly blunting the enjoyment of the work of original men. Nevertheless, in every school these engrafted pictures must exist; and it is a cause for sincere congratulation when the habit, which is becoming derivatively universal, is to read human nature and history with sympathy for nobleness and desire for truth.

[1] [A.D. 1347. "Then the kinge sayde . . . let syxe of the chiefe burgesses of the towne come out bareheaded, barefooted, barelegged, and in their shirtes, with halters about their neckes, with the kayes of the towne and castell in their handes, and let them syxe yelde themselfe purely to my wyll, and the residue I will take to mercye."—Froissart's *Chronicles.*]

Digitized by Google

492. THE REV. F. D. MAURICE. (*L. Dickinson.*[1])

Like, and good; an entirely well-meant and well-wrought portrait; coming a little hard, in consequence of the endeavour to paint all the expression of an expressive face: but it is a good fault. Our portraits are in general wanting in power, owing to a misunderstanding of Sir Joshua, and the idea that his playful tenderness and easy precision are imitable by slovenliness.

Generally speaking, portraiture may be divided into three great schools: the greatest is the Venetian, headed by Titian, and entirely right; on one side of it, is the German school, headed by Holbein, erring slightly on the side of intenseness and force of definition; on the other side of it, the English school, headed by Sir Joshua, erring slightly on the side of facility and grace of abstraction.* Now, the Venetians and Sir Joshua are, for the present, wholly inimitable; but Holbein is imitable, and is the best model for us.[2]

609. THE KING'S ORCHARD.[3] (*A. Hughes.*)

Mr. Hughes's exquisite sense of colour and delicacy

* For the sake of simplicity of conception, Velasquez must be classed with the Venetians, to whom he belongs in right of his style, and Vandyck with the English; in fact, he, with Sir Joshua and Gainsborough, constitute the whole school.

---

[1] [Lowes Dickinson, the well-known portrait-painter, was a friend of Maurice, and took drawing-classes at the Working Men's College at the same time as Ruskin. See Vol. V. p. xxxviii.]

[2] [In connexion with this classification of portrait-painters, see, for Titian and the Venetians, *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 193) and compare a passage above, p. 118; for Holbein's portraiture, the paper on "Sir Joshua and Holbein," §§ 12, 13, and *Ariadne Florentina*, §§ 171, 177; for Sir Joshua's "unerring insight, erring though slightly on the side of facility," see *The Two Paths*, § 63, and compare *The Art of England*, § 65.]

[3] [The picture was suggested by *Pippa Passes*:—

"And peasants sing how once a certain page
Pined for the grace of her so far above
His power of doing good to, 'Kate the Queen—
'She never could be wronged, be poor,' he sighed,
'Need him to help her!'"

In the Academy Catalogue, Browning's lines were unkindly printed as prose.]

Digitized by Google

of design are seen to less advantage than usual. He has been allowing himself to go astray by indulging too much in his chief delight of colour; and this picture, which was quite lovely when I saw it last year incomplete, is now throughout too gay, and wanting in sweetness of shade, but most accomplished and delicious in detached passages; and the apple-blossom, among all its ruddy rivals on the walls this year, is tenderly, but triumphantly, victorious—it is the only blossom which is soft enough in texture, or round enough in bud. There is the making of a magnificent painter in Mr. Hughes; but he must for some time yet stoop to conquer—be content with cottagers' instead of kings' orchards, and bow to the perhaps distressing but assured fact, that a picture can be no more wholly splendid than it can be wholly white.

900. Too Late.[1] (*W. L. Windus.*)

Something wrong here: either this painter has been ill;* or his picture has been sent in to the Academy in a hurry; or he has sickened his temper and dimmed his sight by reading melancholy ballads. There is great grandeur in the work; but it cannot for a moment be compared with "Burd Helen."[2] On the whole, young painters must remember this great fact, that painting, as a mere physical exertion, requires the utmost possible strength of constitution and of heart. A stout arm, a calm mind, a merry

* I fear this has been the fact. See the Postscript at the end of these pages [p. 239].

---

[1] [The picture was illustrated in the catalogue by Tennyson's lines :—

"If it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest;
Wed whom thou wilt; but I am sick of time,
And I desire to rest."]

[2] [See above, p. 85.]

Digitized by Google

heart, and a bright eye are essential to a great painter. Without all these he can, in a great and immortal way, do nothing.

Wherefore, all puling and pining over deserted ladies, and knights run through the body, is, to the high artistic faculty, just so much poison. Frequent the company of right-minded and nobly-souled persons; learn all athletic exercises, and all delicate arts—music more especially; torment yourself neither with fine philosophy nor impatient philanthropy—but be kind and just to everybody; rise in the morning with the lark,[1] and whistle in the evening with the blackbird; and in time you may be a painter. Not otherwise.

908. Val d'Aosta.[2] (*J. Brett.*)

Yes, here we have it at last—some close-coming to it at least—historical landscape, properly so called—landscape painting with a meaning and a use. We have had hitherto plenty of industry, precision quite unlimited; but all useless, or nearly so, being wasted on scenes of no majesty or enduring interest. Here is, at last, a scene worth painting—painted with all our might (not quite with all our heart, perhaps, but with might of hand and eye). And here, accordingly, for the first time in history, we have, by help of art, the power of visiting a place, reasoning about it, and knowing it, just as if we were there, except only that we cannot stir from our place, nor look behind us. For the rest, standing before this picture is just as good as standing on that spot in Val d'Aosta, so far as gaining of knowledge is concerned; and perhaps in some degree pleasanter, for it would be very hot on that rock to-day, and there would probably be a disagreeable smell of juniper plants growing on the slopes above.

[1] [For other references to this counsel, see Vol. XIII. p. 137 *n.*]
[2] [The view of the valley was taken near the village of Villeneuve.]

Digitized by Google

So if any simple-minded, quietly-living person, indisposed towards railroad stations or crowded inns, cares to know in an untroublous and uncostly way what a Piedmontese valley is like in July, there it is for him. Rocks overlaid with velvet and fur to stand on in the first place: if you look close into the velvet you will find it is jewelled and set with stars in a stately way. White poplars by the roadside, shaking silvery in the wind: I regret to say the wind is apt to come up the Val d'Aosta in an ill-tempered and rude manner, turning leaves thus the wrong side out; but it will be over in a moment. Beyond the poplars you may see the slopes of arable and vineyard ground, such as give the wealth and life to Italy which she idly trusts in—ground laid ages ago in wreaths, like new cut hay by the mountain streams, now terraced and trimmed into all gentle service. If you want to know what vines look like under Italian training (far from the best), *that* is the look of them—the dark spots and irregular cavities, seen through the broken green of their square-set ranks, distinguishing them at any distance from the continuous pale fields of low-set staff and leaf, divided by no gaps of gloom, which clothe a true vine country. There, down in the mid-valley, you see what pasture and meadow land we have, we Piedmontese, with our hamlet and cottage life, and groups of glorious wood. Just beyond the rock are two splendid sweet chestnut trees, with forming fruit, good for making bread of, no less than maize; lower down, far to the left, a furlong or two of the main stream with its white shore and alders: not beautiful, for it has come down into all this fair country from the Courmayeur glaciers, and is yet untamed, cold, and furious, incapable of rest. But above, there is rest, where the sunshine streams into iridescence through branches of pine, and turns the pastures into strange golden clouds, half grass, half dew; for the shadows of the great hills have kept the dew there since morning. Rest also, calm enough, among the ridges of rock and forest that heap themselves into that purple pyramid high on the right. Look well into the making

Digitized by Google

of it—it is indeed so that a great mountain is built and bears itself, and its forest fringes, and village jewels—for those white spots far up the ravine are villages—and peasant dynasties are hidden among the film of blue. And above all are other more desolate dynasties—the crowns that cannot shake—of jagged rock; they also true and right, even to their finest serration. So it is that the snow lies on those dark diadems for ever.[1] A notable picture truly; a possession of much within a few feet square.

Yet not, in the strong, essential meaning of the word, a noble picture. It has a strange fault, considering the school to which it belongs—it seems to me wholly emotionless. I cannot find from it that the painter loved, or feared, anything in all that wonderful piece of the world. There seems to me no awe of the mountains there—no real love of the chestnuts or the vines. Keenness of eye and fineness of hand as much as you choose; but of emotion, or of intention, nothing traceable. Not but that I believe the painter to be capable of the highest emotion: any one who can

[1] [It may be interesting to read in connexion with this passage Ruskin's impressions of the Val d'Aosta. The passage occurs in a letter to his father from Ivrea, August 26, 1851 :—

"I was more than satisfied yesterday of the justice of the Val d'Aosta's reputation. We came some fifty miles through scenery of continually increasing magnificence. The part just below Aosta is comparatively uninteresting, but from Chatillon here it is far more wonderful as *rock* scenery than anything I have seen among the Alps. There are no *glaciered* mountains; therefore it is not altogether in my way, but the rocks rise from the level of the plain of Piedmont until their tops are sprinkled with snow, giving a clear height of at least 8000 feet, and this attained not in the unbroken precipices which the eye never can measure, but in rolling curves of massy crag, divided into myriads of knolls and ravines and minor precipices—a perfect world of winding glen and iron rock, which as it descends into the valley is literally roofed over with continuous trellises of vines, only here and there a huge fallen mass of the size of the hull of a ship of the line lying in the midst of the green ranges of trellis and clusters of grapes, and sometimes a bank of turf shadowed with huge chestnut trees, springing out four and five trunks in a cluster, and as if that were not enough, throwing forth from their roots whole clusters of saplings and large-leaved copse of jagged green. Fort Bard is an ugly fort in itself, but on the noblest rock I ever saw—so *clean* and pure, no dusty fractures or débris, but velvet brown lichenous surface and mighty chasms between the bastions, and the mountains on each side all the same, up to their crests."]

Digitized by Google

paint thus must have passion within him; but the passion here is assuredly not out of him. He has cared for nothing, except as it was more or less pretty in colour and form. I never saw the mirror so held up to Nature;[1] but it is Mirror's work, not Man's. This absence of sentiment is peculiarly indicated by the feeble anger of the sky. Had it been wholly cloudless—burning down in one calm field of light behind the purple hills, all the rest of the landscape would have been gathered into unity by its repose; and for the sleeping girl we should have feared no other disturbance than the bleating of the favourite of her flock, who has returned to seek her—his companions wandering forgetful. But now she will be comfortlessly waked by hailstorm in another quarter of an hour: and yet there is no majesty in the clouds, nor any grand incumbency of them on the hills; they are but a dash of mist, gusty and disagreeable enough—in no otherwise to be dreaded; highly un-divine clouds—incognizant of Olympus—what have they to do here upon the hill thrones—*κορυφᾶις ἱεραῖς χιονοβλήτοισι.*[2]

Historical landscape it is, unquestionably; meteorological also; poetical—by no means: yet precious, in its patient way; and, as a wonder of toil and delicate handling, unimpeachable. There is no such subtle and precise work on any other canvas here. The chestnut trees are like a finished design of Dürer's—every leaf a study; the poplar trunks and boughs drawn with an unexampled exquisiteness of texture and curve. And if it does not touch you at first, stay by it a little; look well at the cottage among the meadows; think of all that this Italian life might be among these sacred hills, and of what Italian life has been, and yet is, in spite of silver crosses on the breast, and how far it is your fault and mine that this is so,—and the picture may be serviceable to you in quite

[1] [*Hamlet*, iii. 2.]
[2] [Aristophanes, *The Clouds*, line 270.]

Digitized by Google

other ways than by pleasing your eyes with purple and gold.[1]

[1] [This picture (reproduced as frontispiece to this volume), which was bought by Ruskin, was lent in 1880 to an exhibition at Douglas. Ruskin then supplied the following Note in the catalogue (described in Vol. XIII. p. lvi.) :—

> "Painted in the summer of 1858. When I was myself in Italy, Mr. Brett visited me at Turin to consult about this picture, which he was then painting from the window of his lodgings, in a grand castle half-way up the valley between Aosta and Courmayeur. I at that time hoped much from his zeal and fineness of minute execution in realizing, with Dürer-like precision, the detail of Swiss landscape. Had he sympathized enough with Swiss and Italian life, his work might have become of extreme value; but, instead, he took to mere photography of physical landscape, and gradually lost both precision and sentiment. How lovely an old-fashioned Swiss or Italian village would have been, painted like this single cottage, some future disciple of the school may consider and hope to show. There is no pretence of composition, or, as usually understood, of painter's skill in this picture. It is the careful delineation of what is supposed to be beautiful in itself; and it has lost, instead of benefited, by the unwise introduction of storm on the hills for the sake of variety. In good, permanent, and honourably finished oil-painting this picture cannot be surpassed; it is as safe as a piece of china, and as finished as the finest engraving."

For the personal reminiscences of 1858, here referred to, see above, Introduction, pp. xxiii., xxiv.; and for a criticism of the picture, made by Millais at the time of its first exhibition, see above, p. 22 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

POSTSCRIPT

It is one of the most difficult and painful duties which I have to perform in these *Notes*, to guard the public against supposing that works executed under circumstances accidentally unfavourable are characteristic of a school, without at the same time hurting the artist's feelings deeply, just when all discouragement is most dangerous to him. I cannot, in justice to the Pre-Raphaelite school, allow Mr. Windus's picture—he being one of its chief leaders—to be looked upon as an example of what that school may achieve; but I trust that he will accept the assurance of my deep respect for his genius, and of my conviction that, with returning strength, he may one day take highest rank among masters of expression.

By inadvertency, I omitted in the arrangement of these detached *Notes* the reference made to Mr. Campbell's wonderful and all but perfect study, "Our Village Clockmaker" (14), full of various power, but perhaps challenging difficulties of detail too manifestly; and to Mr. Calderon's "Lost and Found"[1] (634), which, if the face of the mother had been but a little more beautiful, would have been one of the most touching, as it is one of the most able, pictures of the year.

I cannot criticise my friend Mr. Watts's picture, "Isabella" (438); it is full of beauty and thoughtfulness. I have no doubt that he knows its faults better than I do;

[1] [Called in the catalogue, "French Peasants finding their Stolen Child."]

Digitized by Google

and they are so slight that the public ought not to see them, but to admire it with all their hearts.[1]

[1] [Ruskin's friendship with Watts was of long standing. See Vol. XI. p. 30 *n.*, where, in the third volume of *Stones of Venice* (1853), he referred to Watts as the "only one painter who is capable of design in colour on a large scale," etc. In the third volume of *Modern Painters* (1856) Watts's work is referred to as "the dawn of a new era in art, in a true unison of the grotesque with the realistic power" (Vol. V. p. 137). Mrs. Richmond Ritchie, in her *Records of Tennyson, Ruskin, and Browning*, has published some letters of Ruskin to Watts (dated 1860, 1861, and 1866), full of warm friendship and sympathetic, if candid, criticism: these are reprinted below, pp. 471–473. In the *Academy Notes* of 1875 there was some published criticism of a like kind (below, p. 266). The second lecture of *The Art of England* (1884) was devoted to Watts and Burne-Jones as representative of "Mythic Schools of Painting." A wreath of laurel sent by Watts lay at the head of Ruskin's coffin.]

Digitized by Google

WATER-COLOUR SOCIETIES

A SOMEWHAT singular circumstance has taken place this year, in the choice of their principal or master piece by two important societies of English artists.

The Society of British Artists placed, as the central attraction of their rooms, an illustration of Shakespeare.* The New Water-Colour Society honoured with a similarly central position an illustration of Tennyson.†

Duly allowing for privileges of seniority and presidentship, it would not be just towards either body of artists if we supposed that the places assigned to these works of art were entirely trustworthy indications of the estimate formed of them. But whether promoted by law, by courtesy, or by admiration, those pictures stood forth to the English—and more than the English—public as in some central or typical way exponents of the power of the two societies; and foreigners, at least, would be justified in concluding that the sanction given by two important bodies of English painters to these readings of the greatest dead and greatest living English poets, indicated with some truth the measure of general understanding of poetry in the artist mind of the country; and perhaps also (as the

* No. 53. "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark" (F. Y. Hurlstone).

† No. 212. "A Dream of Fair Women" (E. H. Corbould). The illustrations of Shakespeare by Mr. Gilbert, which occupy a conspicuous position (on each side of Mr. Burton's centre piece) in the rooms of the Old Water-Colour Society, curiously involve that society also in a parallel manifestation of opinion.[1]

[1] [No. 125. "Sir Andrew Aguecheek writes a Challenge," and No. 132. "The Banquet at Lucentio's House."]

Digitized by Google

appeal to public judgment was made so frankly) something of the public mind of this country on the same matter.

I am not going to criticise those pictures. If the reader is not of my mind about them, I should not have any hope of being able to make him so—nor even any wish to make him so. If he *is* of my mind about them, he will understand why they should have set me thinking—not on the whole pleasurably—of the course and probable prospects of the curious group of English personages to whom art now addresses itself. For it would not be difficult to show, if necessary, that these two works do verily express the final and entirely typical issue of the most popular modern views on the subject of poetry in general: and more than this, there is a certain typical character even in the hero and heroines of the pictures—the "Hamlet" not unworthily representing what is popularly considered as Philosophy; the "Jephthah's Daughter"[1] what is popularly accepted as Piety; and the "Cleopatra" what is popularly displayed as Splendour.

Or, in a nearer and narrower view, these pictures contain a concentrated expression of the character which distinguishes a modern English exhibition of paintings from every other that has yet been, or is likely to be. Bad painting is to be found in abundance everywhere, so that we do not distinguish ourselves by our weakness; foolish painting in greater abundance still, so that we do not distinguish ourselves by our imbecility; more or less meritorious painting, at least in all principal French and German schools, as well as in ours, so that we do not distinguish ourselves by our merit: but purely and wholly vulgar painting is not to be found developing itself elsewhere with the same *naïveté* as among the English; and we *do* distinguish ourselves by our vulgarity. So, at least, it appears to me. As I have just said, I do not wish to argue with

[1] ["Jephthah's Daughter" and "Cleopatra" were among the figures in Corbould's illustration of Tennyson's poem.]

Digitized by Google

any one who disputes the fact, but to trace thence one or two conclusions with those who admit it.

What vulgarity is, whether in manners, acts, or conceptions, most well-educated persons understand; but what it consists in, or arises from, is a more difficult question.[1] I believe that on strict analysis it will be found definable as "the habit of mind and act resulting from the prolonged combination of insensibility with insincerity";* and I think the special manifestation of it among artists has resulted, in the first place, from the withdrawal of all right, and therefore, all softening, or animating motive for their work; and, in the second place, from the habit of assuming, or striving by rule to express, feelings which did not, and could not, arise out of their work under such conditions.

I say first, by the withdrawal of all softening or animating motive, and chiefly by the loss of belief in the spiritual world. Art has never shown, in any corner of the earth, a condition of advancing strength but under this influence. I do not say, observe, influence of "religion," but merely of a belief in some invisible power—god or goddess, fury or fate, saint or demon. Where such belief existed, however sunk or distorted, progressive art has been possible,

* It would be more accurate to say, "constitutional insensibility"; for people are born vulgar, or not vulgar, irrevocably. An apparent insensibility may often be caused by one strong feeling quenching or conquering another; and this to the extent of involving the person in all kinds of cruelty and crime: yet, Borgia or Ezzelin, lady and knight still; while the born clown is dead in all sensation and capacity of thought, whatever his acts or life may be.

Cloten, in *Cymbeline*, is the most perfect study of pure vulgarity which I know in literature; Perdita, in *Winter's Tale*, the most perfect study of its opposite (irrespective of such higher virtue or intellect as we have in Desdemona or Portia). Perdita's exquisite openness, joined with as exquisite sensitiveness, constitute the precise opposite of the apathetic insincerity which, I believe, is the essence of vulgarity.[2]

[1] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 117–118), and vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vii., "Of Vulgarity"; *Elements of Drawing*, § 240; *Sesame and Lilies*, § 28; and *Art of England*, § 161.]

[2] [For Lucrezia Borgia, see *Two Paths*, § 187; for Ezzelin, Vol. XII. p. 137 *n.*; for Cloten (as a contrast to Imogen), *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 112); for Perdita, *ibid.* (Vol. V. p. 99), and vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 442).]

Digitized by Google

otherwise impossible.[1] The distortion of the belief, its contraction or its incoherence, contract or compress the resultant art; still the art is evermore of another and mightier race than the art of materialism. Be so much of a Pythagorean as to believe in something awful and impenetrable connected with beans, and forthwith you are not weaker, but stronger, than your kitchenmaid, who perceives in them only an adaptability to being boiled. Be so much of an Egyptian as to believe that some god made hawks, and bears up their wings for them on the wind, and looks for ever through the fierce light of their eyes, that therefore it is not good to slay hawks, and some day you may be able to paint a hawk quite otherwise than will be possible to you by any persistency in slaughter or dissection, or help of any quantity of stuffing and glass beads in thorax or eye-socket. Be so much of a Jew as to believe that there is a great Spirit who makes the tempests his true messengers, and the flaming fire his true servant, and lays the beams of his chambers upon the unshrinking sea,[2] and you will paint the cloud, and the fire, and the wave, otherwise, and on the whole better, than in any state of modern enlightenment as to the composition of caloric or protoxide of hydrogen. Or, finally, be so much of a human creature as to care about the heart and history of fellow-creatures, and to take so much concern with the facts of human life going on around you as shall make your art in some sort compassionate, exhortant, or communicative, and useful to any one coming after you, either as a record of what was done among men in your day, or as a testimony of what you felt or knew concerning them and their misdoings or undoings,—and this love and dwelling in the spirits of other creatures will give a glory to your work quite unattainable by observance of any proportions of arms and collar-bones hitherto stated

[1] [With the following passage—a central one in Ruskin's writings—compare (among other places where he insists on religion in this sense—of the recognition of spiritual being—as the root of great and progressive art), *Lectures on Art*, §§ 37 *seq.*; *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 70); *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 6).]

[2] [Psalms civ. 3, 4.]

Digitized by Google

by professors of Man-painting. All this is irrevocably so; and since, as a nation concerning itself with art, we have wholly rejected these heathenish, Jewish, and other such beliefs—and have accepted, for things worshipful, absolutely nothing but pairs of ourselves—taking for exclusive idols, gods, or objects of veneration the infinitesimal points of humanity, Mr. and Mrs. P., and the Misses and Master P.'s, —out, I say, of this highly punctuated religion, which comes to its full stop and note of admiration after the family name, we shall get nothing, *can* get nothing, but such issues as we see here. The whole temper of former art was in some way reverential—had awe in it: no matter how carefully or conventionally the workman ruled and wrought the psalter page, he had every now and then a far-away feeling that it was to be prayed out of—somebody would pray out of it some day—not entirely mechanically, nor by slip of bead. No matter how many Madonnas he painted to order from the same outlines, the sense that the worst of them was sure, late or soon, to be looked up to through tears, could not but thrill through him as he arched the brow and animated the smile: nay, if he was but a poor armourer or enameller, the feeling that those chased traceries of cuish and helmet would be one day embossed in hot purple, deeper, perhaps, through fault of his, would every now and then make his hammer smite with sterner, truer tone—awe and pity ruling over all his doings, such as now are unattainable. For Mr. and Mrs. P. are not in that sense awful—not in that sense pitiable: both—in another and deeper sense, but not in this.

Then the second source of the evil is the endeavour to assume the sentiment which we cannot possibly have. Let us accept our position, and good scientific, or diagrammatic, or politely personal and domestic art is still possible to us —still may be made, if not majestic work, yet real work. There is use in a good geological diagram; and there is good riding in Rotten Row, to be seen any day between four and six; but if we profess to paint ghosts, when we

Digitized by Google

believe in no immortality—or Iphigenias and daughters of Jephthah, when we believe in no Deity—this is what we come to: not but that even ghosts are indeed still to be seen, and Iphigenias found (though perhaps sacrificed not altogether to Diana) by sharp-sighted persons—upon occasion.

It may be thought, I speak too seriously—or speak seriously in the wrong place—of this matter. I do not. The pictures are ludicrous enough. That which they signify is not ludicrous. And, as if to make us think out their signification fully, the Tennyson picture has a companion —an opposite at least—another illustration of English poetry by English art: the gate of Eden, with a Peri at it—an interesting scene to people who believe in Eden.[1] We suppose ourselves to be rather nearer that gate—do not we? —than any of the old shepherds who saw ladders set to it in their dreams. And this is the aspect assumed by the gate, and the aspect of the angels in—or outside of it—upon such closer acquaintance. A "strait gate" truly.[2]

This being so, I cannot enter with any pleasure into examination of the works of the two Water-Colour Societies this year. For in their very nature those two societies appeal to the insensitiveness and pretence of the public: insensitiveness, because no refined eye could bear with the glaring colours, and blotted or dashed forms, which are the staple of modern water-colour work; and pretence, because this system of painting is principally supported by the idle amateurs who concern themselves about art without being truly interested in it; and by pupils of the various water-colour masters, who enjoy being taught to sketch brilliantly in six lessons.

In spite of all the apparent exertion, and reflex of Pre-Raphaelite minuteness from the schools above them, the Water-Colour Societies are in steady descent. They were founded first on a true and simple school of broad light and

[1] [New Water-Colour Society, No. 73: "The Peri," by Henry Warren.]
[2] [For the Biblical references, see Genesis xxviii. 12 and Matthew vii. 13.]

Digitized by Google

shade — grey touched with golden colour on the lights. This, with clear and delicate washes for its transparent tones, was the method of all the earlier men; and the sincere love of Nature which existed in the hearts of the first water-colour masters—Girtin, Cozens, Robson, Copley Fielding, Cox, Prout, and De Wint—formed a true and progressive school, till Hunt, the greatest of all, perfected his art. Hunt and Cox alone are left of all that group, and their works in the Old Water-Colour are the only ones which are now seriously worth looking at; for in the endeavour to employ new resources, to rival oil colour, and to display facility, mere method has superseded all feeling and all wholesome aim, and has itself become finally degraded.[1] The sponge and handkerchief have destroyed water-colour painting; and I believe there are now only two courses open to its younger students—either to "hark back" at once to the old grey schools, and ground themselves again firmly on chiaroscuro studies with the flat grey wash, or to take William Hunt for their only master, and resolve that they will be able to paint a piece of leafage and fruit approximately well in his way before they try even the smallest piece of landscape. If they want to follow Turner, the first course is the only one. Steady grey and yellow for ten years, and lead pencil point all your life, or no "Turnerism."[2] No "dodge" will ever enable you otherwise to get round that corner. Those are the terms of the thing; we may accept or not as we choose, but there are no others. I name, however, a few of the works in the rooms of the two societies which are at least indicative of power to do well, if the painters choose.

In the New Water-Colour, Mr. E. G. Warren's[3] "Lost in the Woods" (88), and "Avenue, Evelyn Wood" (228), are good instances of deceptive painting—scene-painting on

[1] [Compare Vol. XIII. p. 247.]
[2] [Compare Vol. XIII. pp. 241–249, 260, etc.]
[3] [Edmund G. Warren (*b.* 1834), a son of Henry Warren, who was for many years President of the Society; he was elected an Associate in 1852, and full Member in 1856.]

Digitized by Google

a small scale—the treatment of the light through the leaf interstices being skilfully correspondent with photographic effects. There is no refined work or feeling in them, but they are careful and ingenious; and their webs of leafage are pleasant fly-traps to draw public attention, which, perhaps, after receiving, Mr. Warren may be able to justify by work better worthy of it.

In Mr. S. Cook's "Hartland Point" (50), the sense of the low trickling of the rivulets of tide through infinite stones is very delightful—alternate rippling and resting of the confined, shallow, wandering water, that hardly will be at the trouble of getting down through the shingle, when it has to come up again over it soon. There are beautiful passages of atmosphere in this, as in all Mr. Cook's drawings this year. The companion studies of morning and evening, on the same cliff (2 and 6), suggest a pretty idea, but not quite successfully.[1] The contrast is not carried far enough in minor details.

Mr. W. Telbin's[2] "Dovedale" (208) is very delightful: on the whole it seems to me the sweetest and rightest thing in the room, but scattered in subject. A pretty place, certainly, but incoherent; neither dark nor light, quiet nor disquieted, tame nor wild, but tenderly chaotic and insipid —suggestive, to me at least, of nothing but going on to see if nothing better is to be found. The sensation, perhaps, is increased by the oval shape—not a wise one for a landscape, where one wants to know accurately the difference between slope and vertical, as bearing much on the sublimities of some things, and the moral characters of others.

Lastly, Mr. Rowbotham's "East Cliff, Hastings" (268) is an earnest and admirable study; strong in discipline, and full of fact, but hard. Neither the sweetest colours nor the subtlest forms have been seen—in fact, the heart of

[1] [No. 2, "Close of Day," No. 6, "Early Summer Morning," both "West Coast of Cornwall."]

[2] [William Telbin, born 1812, elected a member of the New Society 1839, died 1873.]

Digitized by Google

the cliff is not opened yet; but its muscular development is right. Yet it is costly drawing this, in attention, considering what water-colour work is usually; and the timbers and other *matériel* are well set in serviceable places. The painter must have felt himself braced after such work, and forwarded, in many ways.

In the rooms of the Old Water-Colour Society, the first thing to be looked at should be Mr. Hunt's marvellous fruit piece, No. 261 ["A Pine-apple and Grapes"]. It seems to me almost the exquisitest I have ever seen, in the glowing grey of the bosses of the pine and sweeping curves of its leaves. After that, David Cox's magnificent waterfall,[1] at the upper end of the room—unsurpassable in its own broad way, and giving, in the foam, examples of execution as broad as Salvator's, and infinitely more subtle and lovely. Then, everything else of David Cox's in the room, especially 274 ["Twilight"]. Next, Mr. A. P. Newton's "Snow Scene" (181), which is very good; but the good of it might be got in a daguerreotype as well, and Mr. Newton can do better than a daguerreotype if he likes. We may well, however, look for his drawings round the room; all have something in them. The Inverness-shire moonlight (218) ["Inverlochy Castle"] is especially good. And then follow round Mr. Naftel (who has made swift advance this year), in the same way, beginning with the beautiful bit of retiring mountain and glittering fern, No. 188; and staying long at No. 44,[2] a notable study of smooth-sculptured torrent bed and flushed hillside. Look also at the rolling clouds in Mr. W. Turner's "Ben Cruachan" (48), which are the truest clouds in the whole room. Then, give as much time as you can to Mr. S. P. Jackson's "Bamborough" (170), and to Mr. W. C. Smith's "Chillon" (91);

[1] [No. 73. No title, but the following lines from Thomson :—

"Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes
From the rude mountain and the mossy wild,
Trembling through rocks abrupt."]

[2] [183. "Grouse, or Blackcock: Study in Glen Falloch." 44. "Head of Loch Lomond, with Ben Lomond in the distance."]

Digitized by Google

both of them quiet and sincere.[1] Chillon, the least bit too red; but the purple towers in shade very good, and the gradations of light in the distance admirable. And it must not be through any importunity of mine if you stay longer; for the rest of the works here are, indeed, some very pretty, and some entertaining, and many very clever, but hardly, so far as I see, calculated either to form our taste or advance our knowledge.

[1] [William Collingwood Smith (1815-1887) was elected a member of the Society in 1849. A collection of his works was exhibited there after his death. Examples may be seen in the South Kensington Museum. For another reference to him, see Vol. XIII. p. 345.]

Digitized by Google

FRENCH EXHIBITION

6. Cherry-seller of Port l'Abbé, Brittany.

Very powerful and systematic in handling; right in form and gesture, and, up to its attempted point, in colour—only the beauty of girls and cherries missed. French girls, the sweetest-tempered living creatures in the world, are not obliged to Monsieur Antigna[1] for his representation of their countenances to the English, as they appear either here or in No. 5 opposite (also a clever work); while "The Pet Squirrel" (4), though full of power, is entirely ignoble in its conception of girlhood. Respecting No. 1,[2] it seems to me, we English might ask—"Is it so rare a thing in France to hold your umbrella over somebody else in a shower as to induce the person so generously protected always to kiss the hem of your robe?" I carried a bag of nuts, as big as an ordinary coal-sack, a mile up hill, from hedge to home, for a tired Lucernoise old woman the other day, getting in return kind thanks indeed, but no pictorial effects of this kind.

57. The Toilet. (*Edouard Frère.*)

This, with 59 and 60,[3] is worthy of the painter, which is saying much; but there is no advance on previous effort. The "Student," exhibited in 1857, contained higher qualities of painting than any shown in the pictures of this year; and, which is a matter of much sorrow to me, I think the faces are on the whole less lovely than they were—quite as

[1] [Alexandre Antigna (1818–1878), pupil of Delaroche, French genre painter.]
[2] [1. "Sympathy and Gratitude." 5. "Brittany: Girls at a Fountain."]
[3] [59. "Artisan's Family." 60. "Cut Finger."]

Digitized by Google

right and deep in expression, but some of their pure beauty lost: this is especially so in the face of the taller girl in 61.[1]

I hear some complaints among the art-talk of the year respecting the "monotony" of Frère's pictures. But rustic life is not, it should be remembered, on the whole an exciting matter. The superiors of the poor rustics occasionally procure them some excitement—in the way of roof-burning, or starvation, or bayonet instead of spade agriculture—with supply of richer manure to their fields than usual. But as Frère has seen it (and he paints only what he has seen), this cottage life, with its morning and evening prayer, and mid-day pottage, is a quiet business. You will not, I believe, get any disquietude from him. There is plenty brewing for us—subjects for historical painting of dramatic interest enough, on the horizon. For the present, we will give our sympathy to the "Cut Finger," and to the tender little Florence, who binds it up, and be content.

91*a*. Bavarian Policemen, etc. (*Louis Knaus.*[2])

A most powerful work, full of entirely right expression, alike in feature and gesture. The distant figures at the opening of the wood are among the most wonderful pieces of complete drawing in a faint tone which I have ever seen; and there is handling in the faces throughout, which, though much inferior to Hogarth in colour, and in deep conception of feeling, approaches him in expressive skill (perhaps there is more resemblance to him in the companion picture, 91*c*, than in this). The painting is everywhere vigorous but fails, as I have said, in colour, especially in the flesh. Gipsies have indeed dark skins, but they have bright life

[1] [61. "Wood Gatherers."]

[2] [Louis Knaus, born at Wiesbaden, 1829, one of the leading genre painters of Germany. In his diary of 1859 at Düsseldorf, Ruskin wrote:—

"Knaus. A true painter. His 'Gamblers' in the Academy here show as much power as the picture in the French Exhibition—the little girl waiting patiently at her father's side, while he is being cheated out of his last groschen by an old—very old—scoundrel to whom the tavern drawer is making signs from behind the duped player."]

Digitized by Google

beneath them; here we have only gipsy mahogany, not gipsy blood. The dog and monkey, however, are perfect —I think, in unexaggerated truth of action and expression, better than Landseer's work. A most notable picture it seems to me, though not a profound one; but its superficial qualities are of the rarest kind. The other, 91*b*,[1] is rather deeper—at least in the dignity of the offended and hopeless wife—but it is coarse in colour.

147. A Country Fair in France. (*C. Troyon.*[2])

There is much cleverness in this picture; but it is painted on a totally false principle, which is doing so much mischief to the whole French school that I trust I may be pardoned for pointing it out very distinctly.

Chiaroscuro is a very noble subject of study, but it is not so noble a study as human nature; nor is it the subject which should mainly occupy our thoughts when we have human nature before us. Generally, we ought to see more in man or woman than that their foreheads come dark against the sky, or their petticoats and pantaloons white against it. If we see nothing but this, and think of nothing else in the company of our fellow-creatures but the depth of their shadows, we are assuredly in such insensitive state of mind as must render all true painting impossible to us. It may be the most important thing about a pollard willow that it comes greyly against a cloud, or gloomily out of a pool. But respecting a man, his greyness or opacity is not the principal fact which it is desirable to state of him. If you cannot see his human beauty, and have no sympathy with his mind, don't paint him. Go and paint logs, or stones, or weeds;—you will not, indeed, paint even these at all supremely, for *their* best beauty is also in a sort human: nevertheless you will not insult them, as you do living creatures, by perceiving in them only opacity. Immense harm has been done in this matter by the popular

[1] ["Woman Fetching her Husband from the Beerhouse."]
[2] [Constant Troyon (1810–1865), the celebrated animal-painter.]

Digitized by Google

misunderstanding of Rembrandt; for Rembrandt's strength is in rendering of human character—not in chiaroscuro. Rembrandt's chiaroscuro is always forced—generally false, and wholly vulgar; it is in all possible ways inferior, *as* chiaroscuro, to Correggio's, Titian's, Tintoret's, Veronese's, or Velasquez's.[1] But in rendering human character, such as he saw about him, Rembrandt is nearly equal to any of these men; and the real power of him is in his stern and steady touch on lip and brow—seen best in his lightest etchings, or in the lightest parts of the handling of his portraits, the head of the Jew in our own gallery[2] being about as good and thorough work as it is possible to see of his. And when this is so, and the great qualities of character and of form are first secured—after them, and in due subordination to them—chiaroscuro and everything else will come rightly and gloriously. And they always do come in such order: no chiaroscuro ever was good, as such, which was not subordinate to character and to form; and all search after it as a first object ends in the loss of the thing itself so sought. One of our English painters, Constable, professed this pursuit in its simplicity: "Though my pictures should have nothing else, they shall have chiaroscuro." The sacrifice was accepted by the Fates, but the prayer denied. His pictures *had* nothing else; but they had *not* chiaroscuro.[3]

[1] [For the different systems of Rembrandt and Veronese in this matter, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 59), and vol. iv. ch. iii. (Vol. VI. pp. 56 *seq.*). For Rembrandt in the same connexion, see further: *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. p. 237), and *Cestus of Aglaia*, §§ 52–54. For the chiaroscuro of Correggio, see Vol. III. p. 317, and *Lectures on Art*, §§ 164, 183; for that of Titian, *Two Paths*, § 58, and *Lectures on Art*, § 177; of Tintoret, *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. pp. 25, 412), and, again, *Lectures on Art*, § 177.]

[2] [No. 51 in the National Gallery.]

[3] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 188 *n.*). For other references to Constable (and they should be consulted as supplementing the passage in the text above), see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. pp. 45, 191); vol. iii. (Vol. V. pp. 162, 171, 423); vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 53, 101); and *Two Paths*, Appendix i.]

Digitized by Google

SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS

I SEE no distinctive reason for noting any of the works in the room at Suffolk Street (though many of them meritorious in their usual way), except only Mr. Baxter's[1] "Red Riding Hood" (158), and Mr. T. Roberts's "Child at Play" (48), and "Opinion of the Press" (173). Of these, the first showed, I thought, a great gift of painting, and great feeling for beauty, if the painter will not try to imitate the superficial qualities of Reynolds more than the sterling ones. The two works by Mr. T. Roberts[2] are interesting; not, indeed, for absolute perfection of attainment, but for their fidelity of light and shade. Many pictures are more brilliant; but it is rare to find any so equally studied and harmoniously balanced in all parts—no bits of colour painted at inconsistent times, or in a changed temper, and therefore discordant. Few people would believe, for instance, that the strong orange touch on the girl's shoulder, in No. 48, was indeed the faithful representation of sunlight reflected at that angle from a purple dress; but so it is, and all the other pieces of effect are as earnestly watched and rendered,* and the figure of the little girl very gracefully designed.

It may not be out of place, in noticing the sentiment of No. 173,[3] which is well and graphically expressed, to warn

* Except the extreme distance, which is sunless.

[1] [Charles Baxter (1809–1879), who commenced life as a bookbinder, first exhibited at the Academy in 1834. He became a member of the Society of British Artists in 1842.]

[2] [So in the catalogue of the Exhibition. Misprinted "W. Roberts" in Ruskin's *Notes*.]

[3] [The subject of the drawing was set forth in the catalogue by the following "Extract from Letter": "Mr. —— has just left us. He brought one of the public journals containing a criticism on my dear husband's picture, and a letter from —— declining to complete the purchase. . . . Come as soon as you can, for we are in much trouble."]

Digitized by Google

young painters against attaching too much importance to press criticism as an influence on their fortunes. If sharp and telling, it is a disagreeable thing to look at when just damp from the type; and it is certainly in an unpleasantly convenient form for one's friends to carry about in their pockets. But, ultimately, it is quite powerless, except so far as it concurs with general public opinion. I have never yet seen even a bad picture crushed by criticism, much less a good one. The sale of a given work may, indeed, be checked, or prevented; but so it may by a whisper, or a chance touch of the elbow. I have seen more real mischief and definite injury to property done in ten minutes by an idle coxcomb amusing his party, than could possibly be done by all the malice in type that could be got into the journals of a season. The printed malice only makes people look at the picture; the fool's jest makes them pass it. And though public taste is capricious enough—and erroneous enough—so as to make it very difficult to say how it is to be strongly wrought upon, yet let all young painters be assured of this—that *an absolutely good painting is always sure of sale.* If they choose to offend the public by wanton eccentricity, or easily avoidable error, they have only themselves to blame when the public loses its temper, and passes their real merits without notice. The charity of artists is in condescending to please; and they deservedly suffer when they have it not. A great and good musician lowers his voice when he sings in a sick-room, and raises it when he has to fill the theatre; he will sing lightly for the child, and simply for the uninstructed, but nobly and gloriously for all. So also a great painter can show his majesty in nothing more than by securing, in timely gentleness, empire over all hearts. It is only his petulance, or his pride—not his power—which will alienate the eyes of men. If Veronese rose now among us, or Correggio, there would be at first a wondering, attentive silence—not a murmur heard against them; and presently they would make the very streets ring for joy, and every lip laugh with acclamation: not because

Digitized by Google

their essential power could be perceived by all—or by one in a thousand of all—but because, up to the point of possible perception, it would be made lovable by all.

I repeat, therefore, to the young painter, in all distinctness and completeness, this assurance: Do your work well, and kindly, and no enemy can harm you. So soon as your picture deserves to be bought, it will be bought. If, indeed, you want to live by your art before you have learned it; or to sell what you know to be worthless, by catching the fancy of the purchaser; or to display your own dexterity, instead of truth in facts; or to preach to people, instead of pleasing them,—in each and all of these cases you must take the chances of your speculation, or the penalty of your presumption. There are, indeed, some things you may preach without presumption; only, do not expect to be paid for your sermons; for people will pay richly for being pleased—scarcely,[1] if at all, for being rebuked.

[1] [The MS. has "scurvily," which may be the right reading.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

VI

NOTES

ON SOME OF

THE PRINCIPAL PICTURES

EXHIBITED IN THE ROOMS OF THE

ROYAL ACADEMY: 1875.

BY

JOHN RUSKIN,

SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART, AND HON. STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

GEORGE ALLEN, SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT,

AND

ELLIS & WHITE, NEW BOND STREET.

1875.

Price One Shilling.

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of the *Notes* of 1875 there were four editions :—

First Edition (1875).—The title-page was as shown on the preceding page. An octavo pamphlet of 60 pages. On the reverse of the title-page is the imprint—"Watson & Hazell, Printers, London and Aylesbury"; preface (here pp. 261–262), pp. 3–4; text, pp. 5–58. The imprint is repeated at the foot of p. 58. On p. 59 is a "Note to Picture 518," added as an afterthought; p. 60 is blank. No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. At the end are two pages of advertisements ("May 1875") of "Works by Mr. Ruskin, lately published or nearly ready." Issued at the end of May, sewn and without wrappers, but with a narrow slip of dark cloth pasted down the back.

Second Edition (1875).—A verbatim reprint of the First, except that the words "Second Edition" are added on the title-page, and the advertisements are dated "June 1875."

Third Edition (1875).—A reprint of the former editions, except that the words "Third Edition" were added to the title-page, and an Index of two pages was added between the Preface and the Text, thus extending the pamphlet to 61 pages, and altering the pagination from p. 5 onwards. This fact was, however, forgotten by the compiler of the index, which was made from the previous editions; the references to pages are, accordingly, erroneous (the number of the page given being two short throughout). The index was in four columns—giving respectively the Number in the Academy Catalogue, the Artist, the Title of the picture, and the Page of Ruskin's pamphlet. It is not here reprinted, as it was not drawn up by Ruskin and would no longer be useful: see the General List of Artists mentioned in *Academy Notes*, below, pp. 311–323.

Fourth Edition (1875).—An exact reprint of the Third, except for the alteration "Fourth" Edition on the title-page, and that the advertisements were dated "July 1875." Some copies of it were furnished with a plain and unprinted wrapper of coloured glazed paper, backed with cloth.

Reprinted (1902) in *Ruskin on Pictures*, vol. ii. pp. 219–264.

At this time Ruskin's publications were not sent out to the press, and no reviews of the pamphlet appeared.

There are no various readings to record, except that here "S." Tinworth has been corrected to "G.," and the "Note to Picture 518" is printed below the notice of the picture (p. 260).]

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

It is now just twenty years since I wrote the first number of these *Notes*, and fifteen since they were discontinued. I have no intention of renewing the series, unless occasionally, should accident detain me in London during the spring. But this year, for many reasons, it seemed to me imperatively proper to say as much as is here said.

And that the temper of the saying may not, so far as I can prevent it, be mistaken, I will venture to ask my reader to hear, and trust that he will believe, thus much concerning myself. Among various minor, but collectively sufficient, reasons for the cessation of these *Notes*, one of the chief was the exclamation of a young artist, moving in good society,—authentically, I doubt not, reported to me, —"D—— the fellow! why doesn't he back his friends?" The general want in the English mind of any abstract conception of justice, and the substitution for it of the idea of fidelity to a party, as the first virtue of public action, had never struck me so vividly before; and thenceforward it seemed to me useless, so far as artists were concerned, to continue criticism which they would esteem dishonourable unless it was false.

But Fortune has so sternly reversed her wheel during these recent years, that I am more likely now to be accused of malice than of equity; and I am therefore at the pains to beg the honest reader to believe that, having perhaps as much pleasure as other people both in backing my friends and fronting my enemies, I have never used, and shall never use, my power of criticism to such end; but that I write now, and have always written, so far as I am

Digitized by Google

able, what may show that there is a fixed criterion of separation between right art and wrong; that no opinion, no time, and no circumstances can ever in one jot change this relation of their Good and Evil; and that it would be pleasant for the British public to recognize the one, and wise in them to eschew the other.

HERNE HILL, *May 23rd*, 1875.

Digitized by Google

NOTES, ETC.

BEFORE looking at any single picture, let us understand the scope and character of the Exhibition as a whole. The Royal Academy of England, in its annual publication, is now nothing more than a large coloured *Illustrated Times* folded in saloons,—the splendidest May number of the *Graphic*, shall we call it? That is to say, it is a certain quantity of pleasant, but imperfect, "illustration" of passing events, mixed with as much gossip of the past, and tattle of the future, as may be probably agreeable to a populace supremely ignorant of the one, and reckless of the other.

Supremely ignorant, I say;—ignorant, that is, on the lofty ground of their supremacy in useless knowledge.

For instance: the actual facts which Shakespeare knew about Rome were, in number and accuracy, compared to those which M. Alma-Tadema knows, as the pictures of a child's first story-book compared to Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*.[1]

But when Shakespeare wrote—

> "The noble sister of Publicola,
> The Moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle
> That's curdled[2] by the frost from purest snow,
> And hangs on Dian's temple"—

[1] [M. Chesneau, in his *English School of Painting*, says: "Alma-Tadema endeavours with untiring patience to represent his figures as they really were in life, and to place them amid surroundings which really belong to them. His whole work is, indeed, an accurate illustration of Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, and ought to delight the minds of archæologists" (p. 263). For Ruskin's further notice of Alma-Tadema, see below, p. 271.]

[2] [*Coriolanus*, v. 3. Ruskin quoted from memory. The word is not "curdled," but "curded," or "curdied" in the folio.]

Digitized by Google

he knew Rome herself, to the heart; and M. Tadema, after reading his Smith's *Dictionary* through from A to Z, knows nothing of her but her shadow; and that, cast at sunset.

Yet observe, in saying that Academy work is now nothing more, virtually, than cheap coloured woodcut, I do not mean to depreciate the talent employed in it. Our public press is supported by an ingenuity and skill in rapid art unrivalled at any period of history; nor have I ever been so humbled, or astonished, by the mightiest work of Tintoret, Turner, or Velasquez, as I was, one afternoon last year, in watching, in the Dudley Gallery, two ordinary workmen for a daily newspaper finishing their drawings on the blocks by gaslight, against time.[1]

Nay, not in skill only, but in pretty sentiment, our press illustration, in its higher ranks, far surpasses—or indeed, in that department finds no rivalship in—the schools of classical art; and it happens curiously that the only drawing of which the memory remains with me as a possession, out of the Old Water-Colour Exhibition of this year—Mrs. Allingham's "Young Customers"[2]—should be, not only by an accomplished designer of woodcut, but itself the illustration of a popular story. The drawing, with whatever temporary purpose executed, is for ever lovely; a thing which I believe Gainsborough would have given one of his own pictures for, —old-fashioned as red-tipped daisies are—and more precious than rubies.[3]

And I am conscious of, and deeply regret, the inevitable warp which my own lately exclusive training under the elder schools gives to my estimate of this current art of the day;

[1] [Compare the paper on *The Black Arts*, below, pp. 357–363.]

[2] [Mrs. William Allingham (Helen Paterson), *b.* 1848, became an Associate of the Old Water-Colour Society in 1875 (the year following her marriage to the Irish poet, William Allingham), and has since been a constant exhibitor. In *The Art of England* (1884), Ruskin placed her name with that of Miss Kate Greenaway at the head of his lecture on "Fairy Land," and specified as her true gift the representation of "the gesture, character, and humour of charming children in country landscapes." Compare also *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, p. 409 of this volume. The drawing of "Young Customers" was painted from a black-and-white drawing on the wood in illustration of Mrs. Ewing's story, "A Flat Iron for a Farthing," in *Aunt Judy's Magazine*.]

[3] [Proverbs iii. 15.]

Digitized by Google

and submissively bear the blame due to my sullen refusal of what good is offered me in the railroad station, because I cannot find in it what I found in the Ducal Palace. And I may be permitted to say this much, in the outset, in apology for myself, that I determined on writing this number of *Academy Notes* simply because I was so much delighted with Mr. Leslie's School, Mr. Leighton's Little Fatima, Mr. Hook's Hearts of Oak, and Mr. Couldery's Kittens,[1] that I thought I should be able to write an entirely good-humoured, and therefore, in all likelihood, practically useful, sketch of the socially pleasant qualities of modern English painting, which were not enough acknowledged in my former essays.

As I set myself to the work, and examined more important pictures, my humour changed, though much against my will. Not more reluctantly the son of Beor found his utterances become benedictory,[2] than I mine—the reverse. But the need of speaking, if not the service (for too often we can help least where need is most), is assuredly greater than if I could have spoken smooth things without ruffling anywhere the calm of praise.

Popular or classic, temporary or eternal, all good art is more or less didactic. My artist adversaries rage at me for saying so;[3] but the gayest of them cannot help being momentarily grave, nor the emptiest-headed occasionally instructive: and whatever work any of them do that is indeed honourable to themselves, is also intellectually helpful, no less than entertaining, to others. And it will be the surest way of estimating the intrinsic value of the art of this year, if we proceed to examine it in the several provinces which its didactic functions occupy; and collect the sum of its teaching on the subjects—which will, I think, sufficiently embrace its efforts in every kind—of Theology, History, Biography, Natural History, Landscape, and as the end of all, Policy.

[1] [See below, pp. 289, 291, 281, 295.]
[2] [Numbers xxii.–xxiv.]
[3] [Compare *The Laws of Fésole*, ch. ix. § 1.]

Digitized by Google

THEOLOGY

584. DEDICATED TO ALL THE CHURCHES.[1] (*G. F. Watts, R.A.*)

Here, at least, is one picture meant to teach; nor failing of its purpose, if we read it rightly. Very beautiful it might have been—and is, in no mean measure; but as years pass by, the artist concedes to himself, more and more, the privilege which none but the feeble should seek, of substituting the sublimity of mystery for that of absolute majesty of form. The relation between this grey and soft cloud of visionary power, and the perfectly substantial, bright, and near presence of the saints, angels, or Deities of early Christian art, involves questions of too subtle interest to be followed here; but in the essential force of it, belongs to the inevitable expression, in each period, of the character of its own faith. The Christ of the thirteenth century was vividly present to its thoughts, and dominant over its acts, as a God manifest in the flesh, well pleased in the people to whom He came; while ours is either forgotten, or seen, by those who yet trust in Him, only as a mourning and departing Ghost.

129. EZEKIEL'S VISION.[2] (*P. F. Poole, R.A.*)

Though this design cannot for a moment be compared with the one just noticed, in depth of feeling, there is yet, as there has been always in Mr. Poole's work, some acknowledgment of a supernatural influence in physical phenomena, which gives a nobler character to his storm-painting than can belong to any merely literal study of the elements. But the piece is chiefly interesting for its parallelism with that "Dedicated to all the Churches," in effacing the fearless

[1] [This picture, under its other title "The Spirit of Christianity," is among those presented by Watts to the nation. It now hangs in the Tate Gallery, No. 1637.]

[2] [This picture was selected for the nation from a bequest made by the artist, who died in 1879. It now hangs in the Tate Gallery, No. 1091.]

Digitized by Google

realities of the elder creed among the confused speculations of our modern one. The beasts in Raphael's vision of Ezekiel[1] are as solid as the cattle in Smithfield; while here, if traceable at all in the drift of the storm-cloud (which, it is implied, was all that the prophet really saw), their animal character can only be accepted in polite compliance with the prophetic impression, as the weasel by Polonius. And my most Polonian courtesy fails in deciphering the second of the four—not-living—creatures.

218. Rachel and her Flock. (*F. Goodall, R.A.*)

This is one of the pictures which, with such others as Holman Hunt's "Scapegoat," Millais's "Dove Returning to the Ark," etc.,[2] the public owe primarily to the leading genius of Dante Rossetti, the founder, and for some years the vital force, of the Pre-Raphaelite school. He was the first assertor in painting, as I believe I was myself in art literature (Goldsmith and Molière having given the first general statements of it),[3] of the great distinctive principle of that school—that things should be painted as they probably did look and happen, and not as, by rules of art developed under Raphael, Correggio, and Michael Angelo, they might be supposed gracefully, deliciously, or sublimely to have happened.

The adoption of this principle by good and great men produces the grandest art possible in the world; the adoption of it by vile and foolish men, very vile and foolish art; yet not so entirely nugatory as imitations of Raphael or Correggio would be by persons of the same calibre. An intermediate and large class of pictures have been produced by painters of average powers; mostly of considerable value,

[1] [In the Pitti Gallery, Florence.]

[2] [For the "Scapegoat," see above, p. 61; for the "Dove," p. 165.]

[3] [Compare *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 21: "It (the Pre-Raphaelite school) was headed, in literary power, by Wordsworth; but the first pure example of its mind and manner of art, as opposed to the erudite and *artificial* schools, will be found, so far as I know, in Molière's song, 'J'aime mieux ma mie.'" See also *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 375). For other references to Goldsmith, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 45), and *Val d'Arno*, § 208.]

Digitized by Google

but which fall again into two classes, according to the belief of the artists in the truth, and understanding of the dignity of the subjects they endeavour to illustrate, or their opposite degree of incredulity, and materialistic vulgarism of interpretation.

The picture before us belongs to the higher class, but is not a fine example of it. We cannot tell from it whether Mr. Goodall believes Rachel to have wept over Ramah[1] from her throne in heaven; but at least we gather from it some suggestion of what she must have looked like when she was no more than a Syrian shepherdess.

That she was a very beautiful shepherdess, so that her lover thought years of waiting but as days, for the love he bore to her, Mr. Goodall has scarcely succeeded in representing. And on the whole he would have measured his powers more reasonably in contenting himself with painting a Yorkshire shepherdess instead of a Syrian one.* Like everybody except myself, he has been in the East. If that is the appearance of the new moon in the East, I am well enough content to guide, and gild, the lunacies of my declining years by the light of the old Western one.

518. JULIAN THE APOSTATE PRESIDING AT A CONFERENCE OF SECTARIANS. (Gibbon, ch. xxiii.) (*E. Armitage, R.A.*[2])

This, I presume, is a modern enlightened improvement on the Disputa del Sacramento.[3] The English Church is to be congratulated on the education she gives her artists.

* Compare, however, at once 582 ["A Seller of Doves"], which is, on the whole, the most honourably complete and scholastic life-size figure in the rooms, with well cast, and unaffectedly well painted, drapery.

[1] [Jeremiah xxxi. 15; and for the following reference, see Genesis xxix. 20.]

[2] [Edward Armitage (1817–1896) is represented in the Tate Gallery by "The Remorse of Judas," painted in 1866, and presented by him to the nation. He was a pupil of Paul Delaroche (see below, p. 488). Wall-paintings by him may be seen in the Palace of Westminster, the parish church of Marylebone, and the church of St. John, Islington.]

[3] [For this work by Raphael in the Vatican, as the "type of the Italian school," see *Elements of Drawing*, § 195, and *Two Paths*, § 21; and compare *A Joy for Ever*, § 147; *Mornings in Florence*, § 75 *n.*; and *Præterita*, ii. § 34.]

Digitized by Google

Fumbling with sham Gothic, penny tracts, and twopenny Scripture prints, among the embers of reverence and sacred life that yet linger on from the soul of ancient days, she holds her own, in outward appearance at least, among our simple country villages; and in our more ignorant manufacturing centres, contentedly enamels the service of Mammon with the praise of God. But in the capital of England—here, on her Vatican hill above St. Peter's church, and beside St. Paul's—*this* is the testimony she wins from art, as compared with the councils of Fathers and concourses of Saints which poor dark-minded Italy once loved to paint. Mr. Armitage, however, has not completed his satire with subtlety; he knows the higher virtue of sectarians as little as Gibbon knew those of Julian,* whose sincere apostasy was not the act of a soul which could "enjoy the agreeable spectacle"[1] of vile dispute among any men—least of all, among those whom he had once believed messengers of Christ.

* "The rarity and grandeur of his character being that he was a Greek in ideas and a Roman in action; who really did, and abstained, strictly to ideal, in a time when everybody else was sadly fallen from his ideal.

"In 353 he is made Cæsar (Constantius having no sons, and he being last of his race); and from that to Constantius' death in 361 he has to fight the Franks and Alemanni. During the last few years of this time I find he lived mostly at Paris—that he fortified the ancient Lutetia (l'Ile de la Cité), built the Thermæ Juliani, the remains of which (Thermes de Julien) are still visible in the Rue de la Harpe, between Palais de Clugny and Ecole de Médecine. Also, in a scarcity of corn from inroads of the Germans, he got a great supply of corn from England (calculated at 120,000 quarters *at once*), and fed people all along the Rhine from Bingen to Cologne. He says (Epist. ii.) he was a Christian up to his twentieth year, 351; and he said nothing about his change (in public) till 361. Then he felt himself the successor of M. Aurelius, and seems to have gone to work in his determined, clear-sighted way. But the pagans seem to have been surprised at his faith as much as the Christians at his apostasy."—Rev. R. St. J. Tyrwhitt.[2]

---

[1] [The reference is to Gibbon, ch. xxiii.: "Julian, who understood and derided their theological disputes, invited to the palace the leaders of the hostile sects, that he might enjoy the agreeable spectacle of their furious encounters." The calculated cynicism of Gibbon was profoundly unsympathetic to Ruskin: see the sweeping criticism in his contribution (reprinted in a later volume of this edition) to the discussion on "The Best Hundred Books" (*Pall Mall Gazette*, 1886). See also *The Bible of Amiens*, *passim*.]

[2] [This note was printed at the end in the original editions of the pamphlet (see Bibliographical Note, p. 260).]

Digitized by Google

1293–1295. Terra-cottas, representing Scenes in the Life of Christ. (*G. Tinworth.*[1])

Full of fire and zealous faculty, breaking its way through all conventionalism to such truth as it can conceive; able also to conceive far more than can be rightly expressed on this scale. And, after all the labours of past art on the Life of Christ, here is an English workman fastening, with more decision than I recollect in any of them, on the gist of the sin of the Jews, and their rulers, in the choice of Barabbas, and making the physical fact of contrast between the man released and the man condemned clearly visible. We must receive it, I suppose, as a flash of really prophetic intelligence on the question of Universal Suffrage.

These bas-reliefs are the most earnest work in the Academy, next to Mr. Boehm's study of Carlyle.[2] But how it happens that, after millions of money have been spent in the machinery of art education at Kensington, an ornamental designer of so high faculty as this one should never in his life have found a human being able to explain to him the first principles of relief, or show him the difference between decorative foliage-sculpture and Norman hatchet-work, I must leave the Kensington authorities to explain, for it passes all my capacities of conjecture, and all my hitherto experience of the costly and colossal public institution of—Nothing—out of which, to wise men, as here, can come nothing; but to fools everywhere—worse than nothing. Kensington has flattened its thousands of weak students

[1] [Mr. George Tinworth (b. 1843), modeller to the Doultons, Lambeth Pottery, whose service he entered in 1866; officer of the French Academy, 1878; studied at the Academy while earning his living as a working wheelwright in Walworth. "Mr. Tinworth recalls with much satisfaction one morning when he was called into the office of Messrs. Doulton, of Lambeth, who had given him a position in their studios to enable him to develop his genius for plastic art. 'Well, Mr. Tinworth,' said Sir Henry Doulton, 'what do you think of Mr. Ruskin as an art critic?' 'That all depends upon what Mr. Ruskin thinks of my work,' was the answer. Mr. Tinworth was then shown Ruskin's critique on his latest exhibits, and—he thought well of the critic's judgment" (*Westminster Gazette*, November 5, 1903). Mr. Tinworth's work may be seen in the Guard's Chapel (twenty-eight panels).]

[2] [See below, p. 288.]

Digitized by Google

into machine pattern-papers: here, it had a true man to deal with; and, for all he has learned of his business, he might as well have lived in South Australia.

HISTORY

26. The Sculpture Gallery. (*L. Alma-Tadema.*[1])

This, I suppose, we must assume to be the principal historical piece of the year; a work showing artistic skill and classic learning, both in high degree. But both parallel in their method of selection. The artistic skill has succeeded with all its objects in the degree of their unimportance. The piece of silver plate is painted best; the griffin bas-relief it stands on, second best; the statue of the empress worse than the griffins, and the living personages worse than the statue. I do not know what feathers the fan with the frightful mask in the handle, held by the nearest lady, is supposed to be made of; to a simple spectator they look like peacock's, without the eyes.[2] And, indeed, the feathers, under which the motto "I serve" of French art seems to be written in these days, are, I think, very literally, all feather and no eyes—the raven's feather, to wit, of Sycorax.[3] The selection of the subject is similarly—one might say, filamentous—of the extremity, instead of the centre. The old

[1] [In the *Art of England*, § 61, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema is named by Ruskin as representatively "classic," as "a careful and learned interpreter of certain phases of Greek and Roman life, and as himself a most accomplished painter, on long-established principles." In the same lecture (§ 77) Ruskin mentions Alma-Tadema as "differing from all the artists I have ever known, except John Lewis, in the gradual increase of technical accuracy, which attends and enhances together the expanding range of his dramatic invention." Tadema was elected A.R.A. in 1876, and R.A. in 1879.]

[2] [Compare the letter in *Hortus Inclusus*, cited in a note in *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. (Vol. IX. p. 288).]

[3] [*The Tempest*, i. 2:—

> *Caliban.* As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed
> With raven's feather from unwholesome fen
> Drop on you both! . . .
> This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother.

The passage is quoted and commented upon in *Munera Pulveris*, § 134.]

Digitized by Google

French Republicans, reading of Rome, chose such events to illustrate her history, as the battle of Romulus with the Sabines, the vow of the Horatii, or the self-martyrdom of Lucretia. The modern Republican sees in the Rome he studies so profoundly, only a central establishment for the manufacture and sale of imitation-Greek articles of virtu.

The execution is dexterous, but more with mechanical steadiness of practice than innate fineness of nerve. It is impossible, however, to say how much the personal nervous faculty of an artist of this calibre is paralyzed by his education in schools which I could not characterize in my Oxford inaugural lectures otherwise than as the "schools of clay,"[1] in which he is never shown what Venetians or Florentines meant by "painting," and allowed to draw his flesh steadily and systematically with shadows of charcoal and lights of cream-soap, without ever considering whether there would be any reflections in the one, or any flush of life in the other. The head on the extreme left is exceptionally good; but who ever saw a woman's neck and hand blue-black under reflection from white drapery, as they are in the nearer figure? It is well worth while to go straight from this picture to the two small studies by Mr. Albert Moore,[2] 356 and 357,[3] which are consummately artistic and scientific work. Examine them closely and with patience; the sofa and basket especially, in 357, with a lens of moderate power; and, by way of a lesson in composition, hide in this picture the little honeysuckle ornament above the head, and the riband hanging over the basket, and see what becomes of everything! Or try the effect of concealing the yellow flower in the hair, in the "Flower Walk." And for comparison with the elementary method of M. Tadema, look at the blue reflection on the chin in this figure; at the reflection of the warm brick wall on its right arm;

[1] [See *Lectures on Art*, chs. v. and vii. §§ 139, 173, 185, etc.]
[2] [Albert Moore (1841–1893), brother of Henry Moore. There is a characteristic example of his work in the Tate Gallery (No. 1549, "Blossoms").]
[3] [356. "A Flower Walk." 357. "Pansies."]

Digitized by Google

and at the general modes of unaffected relief by which the extended left arm in "Pansies" detaches itself from the background. And you ought afterwards, if you have an eye for colour, never more to mistake a tinted drawing for a painting.

233. THE FESTIVAL. (*E. J. Poynter, A.*[1])

I wonder how long Mr. Poynter thinks a young lady could stand barefoot on a round-runged ladder; or that a sensible Greek girl would take her sandals off to try, on an occasion when she had festive arrangements to make with care. The ladders themselves, here and in No. 236 ("The Golden Age"), appear to me not so classical, or so rude, in type, as might have been expected, but to savour somewhat of expeditious gas-lighting. Of course Mr. Poynter's object in No. 236 is to show us, like Michael Angelo, the adaptability of limbs to awkward positions.[2] But he can only, by this anatomical science, interest his surgical spectators; while "The Golden Age," in this pinchbeck one, interests nobody. Not even the painter,—for had he looked at the best authorities for account of it, he would have found that its people lived chiefly on corn and strawberries, both growing wild; and doubtless the loaded fruit-branches drooped to their reach. Both these pictures are merely studies of decorative composition, and have far too much pains taken with them for their purpose. Decorative work, however complete, should be easy.

401. READY! (*P. Cockerell.*)

I suppose this is meant for portrait, not history. At all events, the painter has been misled in his endeavour, if he made any, to render Swiss character, by Schiller's absurd

[1] [Sir Edward Poynter (*b.* 1836) who had been elected A.R.A. in 1868, was elected R.A. in 1876; President in 1896, in succession to Millais.]

[2] [In his *Lectures on Art* (1879) Sir Edward Poynter replied to Mr. Ruskin's criticisms on Michael Angelo: see especially Lecture ix.]

Digitized by Google

lines. Schiller, of all men high in poetic fame whose works are in any wise known to me, has the feeblest hold of facts, and the dullest imagination. "Still as a lamb!"[1] Sucking, I suppose?—they are so very quiet in that special occupation; and never think of such a thing as jumping, when they have had enough, of course? And I should like to hear a Swiss (or English) boy, with any stuff in him, liken himself to a lamb! If there were any real event from which the legend sprung, the boy's saying would have been not in the smallest degree pathetic: "Never fear *me*, father; I'll stand like grandmother's donkey when she wants him to go,"—or something to such effect.

482. THE BABYLONIAN MARRIAGE MARKET. (*E. Long.*[2])

A painting of great merit, and well deserving purchase by the Anthropological Society. For the varieties of character in the heads are rendered with extreme subtlety; while, as a mere piece of painting, the work is remarkable, in the modern school, for its absence of affectation: there is no insolently indulged indolence nor vulgarly asserted dexterity,—the painting is good throughout, and unobtrusively powerful.

It becomes a question of extreme interest with me, as I examine this remarkable picture, how far the intensely subtle observation of physical character and expression which rendered the painting of it possible, necessitates the isolation of the artist's thoughts from subjects of intellectual interest or moral beauty. Certainly the best expressional works of the higher schools present nothing analogous to the anatomical precision with which the painter has here gradated the feature and expression of the twelve waiting girls, from great physical beauty to absolute ugliness, and from the

[1] ["Walther Tell . . . ich will nicht gebunden seyn. Ich will still halten wie ein Lamm."—Act iii. sc. 3.]

[2] [Edwin Longsden Long (1829–1891) was elected A.R.A. in the year following the exhibition of this picture (now in the collection at Holloway College). He was elected R.A. in 1881. In addition to his pictures of biblical and archæological interest he painted some portraits; one of Sir Stafford Northcote is in the National Portrait Gallery.]

Digitized by Google

serene insolence and power of accomplished fleshly womanhood to the restless audacity and crushed resignation of its despised states of personal inferiority, unconsoled by moral strength or family affection. As a piece of anthropology, it is the natural and very wonderful product of a century occupied in carnal and mechanical science. In the total paralysis of conception—without attempt to disguise the palsy—as to the existence of any higher element in a woman's mind than vanity and spite, or in a man's than avarice and animal passion, it is also a specific piece of the natural history of our own century; but only a partial one, either of it, or of the Assyrian, who was once as "the cedars in the garden of God."[1]

The painter has in the first instance misread his story or been misled by his translation.[2] This custom, called wise by Herodotus, is so called only as practised in country districts with respect to the fortuneless girls of the lower labouring population; daughters of an Assyrian noble, however plain-featured, would certainly not be exposed in the market to receive dowry from the dispute for their fairer sisters.* But there is matter of deeper interest in the

* The passage in Strabo[3] which gives some countenance to the idea of universality in the practice, gives a somewhat different colour to it by the statement that over each of the three great Assyrian provinces a "temperately wise" person was set to conduct the ordinances of marriage.

[1] [Ezek. xxxi. 3, 8: "Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon. . . . The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him."]

[2] ["Herodotus records one of their customs, which, whether in jest or earnest, he declares to be the wisest he ever heard of. This was their wife-auction, by which they managed to find husbands for all their young women. The greatest beauty was put up first, and knocked down to the highest bidder; then the next in the order of comeliness—and so on to the damsel who was equidistant between beauty and plainness, who was given away gratis. Then the least plain was put up, and knocked down to the gallant who would marry her for the smallest consideration—and so on till the plainest was got rid of to some cynical worthy, who placidly preferred lucre to looks. By transferring to the scale of the ill-favoured the prices paid for the fair, beauty was made to endow ugliness, and the rich man's taste was the poor man's gain."—Swayne's *Herodotus*. The reference is to Herodotus, book i. 196. For another reference to it, see *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 263).]

[3] [Book xvi. ch. i. § 20: "Three discreet persons, chiefs of each tribe, are appointed, who present publicly young women who are marriageable, and give notice by the crier, beginning with those most in estimation, of a sale of them to men intending to become husbands. In this manner marriages are contracted."]

Digitized by Google

custom, as it is compared to our modern life. However little the English educated classes now read their Bibles, they cannot but, in the present state of literary science, be aware that there is a book, once asserted to have been written by St. John, in which a spiritual Babylon is described as the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, and her ruin represented as lamentable, especially to the *merchants* who trafficked with her in many beautiful and desirable articles, but above all in "souls of men."[1]

Also, the educated reader cannot but be aware that the animosity of Christian sects—which we have seen the subject of another important national-historical picture in this Academy[2]—has for the last three hundred years wasted much of their energy in endeavours to find Scriptural reason for calling each other Babylonians, and whatever else that term may be understood to imply.

There is, however, no authority to be found in honestly read Scripture for these well-meaning, but ignorant, incivilities. Read in their entirety, the books of the Bible represent to us a literal and material deliverance of a visibly separated people from a literal bondage; their establishment in a literally fruitful and peaceful land; and their being led away out of that land, in consequence of their refusal to obey the laws of its Lord, into a literal captivity in a small material Babylon. The same Scriptures represent to us a spiritual deliverance of an invisibly separated people from spiritual bondage; their establishment in the spiritual land of Christian joy and peace; and their being led away out of this land into a spiritual captivity in a great spiritual Babylon, the mother of abominations, and in all active transactions especially delightful to "merchants"—persons engaged, that is to say, in obtaining profits by exchange instead of labour.

[1] [Revelation xvii. 5, xviii. 11–13. "Once asserted," etc., but much doubted, even in very early times, and the book is now generally admitted to be a compilation of a Jewish apocalypse (written about 68 A.D.) with later Christian interpolations and additions (about 140 A.D.).]

[2] [See above, pp. 267, 269.]

Digitized by Google

And whatever was literally done, whether apparently wise or not, in the minor fleshly Babylon, will therefore be found spiritually fulfilled in the major ghostly one; and, for instance, as the most beautiful and marvellous maidens were announced for literal sale by auction in Assyria, are not also the souls of our most beautiful and marvellous maidens announced annually for sale by auction in Paris and London, in a spiritual manner, for the spiritual advantages of position in society?

BIOGRAPHY

Under this head I include Drama, Domestic Incident, and Portrait—this last being, if good, the sum of what drama and domestic chances have been wrought by, and befallen to, the person portrayed.

Not to begin with too high matters, and collapse subsequently, suppose we first contemplate the pretty little scene,

408. Domestic Troubles. (*J. Burr.*)

The boy peeping in fearfully at the door has evidently, under the inspiration of modern scientific zeal, dissected the bellows; and whether they will ever help the pot to boil again is doubtful to grandpapa. The figure of the younger child, mute with awe and anxiety, yet not wholly guiltless of his naughty brother's curiosity, is very delightful. Avenging Fate, at the chimney-piece, is too severe.

I have marked, close by it, two other pictures, 403, 405, which interested me for reasons scarcely worth printing.[1] The cloister of Assisi has been carefully and literally studied, in all but what is singular or beautiful in it—namely, the flattened dome over its cistern, and the central mossy well

[1] [403. "The Convent of San Francesco during the Sacking of the City of Assisi by the Perugians, 1442" (F. W. W. Topham). 405. "On the Ponte della Paglia, Going to the Council" (H. Wallis).]

Digitized by Google

above. But there is more conscientious treatment of the rest of the building, and greater quietness of natural light, than in most picture backgrounds of these days. "Ponte della Paglia," 405,[1] may be useful to travellers in at least clearly, if not quite accurately, showing the decorative use of the angle sculpture of the drunkenness of Noah on the Ducal Palace;[2] and the Bridge of Sighs is better painted than usual.

242. A Merrie Jest. (*H. S. Marks, A.*[3])

Very characteristic of the painter's special gift. The difficulty of so subtle a rendering as this of the half-checked yet extreme mirth of persons naturally humorous, can only be judged of by considering how often aspects of laughter are attempted in pictures, and how rarely we feel ourselves inclined to join in the merriment. The piece of accessory landscape is very unaffected and good, and the painting throughout, here, as well as in the equally humorous, and useless, picture of bygone days, 166,[4] of good standard modern quality.

107. The Barber's Prodigy. (*J. B. Burgess.*[5])

A close and careful study of modern domestic drama, deserving notice, however, chiefly for its unaffected manner of work and moderately pleasant incident, as opposed to over-laboured pictures of what is merely ugly or meanly faultful,

[1] [By H. Wallis.]

[2] [See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. pp. 357–358, and Plate I.).]

[3] [H. Stacy Marks (1829–1898), who became R.A. in 1878, was for many years on friendly terms with Ruskin—a friendship of which a pleasant memorial (with several letters from Ruskin) is given in the painter's *Pen and Pencil Sketches*, ii. ch. xxiii. See also Vol. XIII. p. xxxviii., and the Introduction in this volume, p. xxviii. In his lectures on the *Art of England* (§ 74), Ruskin expressed his "admiration of the kind of portraiture which, without supporting its claim to public attention by the celebrity of its subjects, renders the pictures of Mr. Stacy Marks so valuable as epitomes and types of English life," and added that "many an old traveller's remembrances were quite pathetically touched by his monumental record of the 'Three Jolly Post-boys.'" Several drawings of birds by Marks are in the collection of the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford.]

[4] ["The Jolly Postboys": see preceding note.]

[5] [John Bagnold Burgess (1830–1897), elected A.R.A. in 1877, and R.A. in 1888.]

Digitized by Google

141, 241—wastes of attention, skill, and time.[1] "Too Good to be True," 153, another clever bit of minor drama, is yet scarcely good enough to be paused at; "Private and Confidential," 375, deserves a few moments more. 879 ["The Beer Fish"] (A. Lüben) is much surer and finer in touch than anything English that I can find in this sort. The Düsseldorf Germans and the Neuchâtel Swiss have been doing splendid domestic work lately; but, I suppose, are too proud to exhibit here.[2]

75. Sophia Western. (*W. P. Frith, R.A.*)

The painter seems not to have understood, nor are the public likely to understand, that Fielding means, in the passage quoted,[3] to say that Miss Western's hands were white, soft, translucent, and at the moment snow-cold. In the picture they cannot be shown to be cold—are certainly not white; do not look soft; and scarcely show the light of the fire on them, much less through them. But what is the use of painting from Fielding at all? Of all our classic authors, it is he who demands the reader's attention most strictly;[4] and what modern reader ever attends to anything?

88. Loot: 1797. (*A. C. Gow.*[5])

An entirely fine picture of its class, representing an ordinary fact of war as it must occur, without any forced sentiment or vulgar accent. Highly skilful throughout, keenly seen, well painted, and deserving a better place than the slow cart-horses and solid waterfalls on the line have left for it.

[1] [141. "A Barber's Shop in Tunis" (J. E. Hodgson, A.). 241. "A Cock Fight" (J. E. Hodgson, A.). 153. (W. Orchardson, A.) 375. (J. Clark.)]

[2] [For the Düsseldorf school, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vi. § 20, and *Eagle's Nest*, § 88.]

[3] ["The lady in the rich habit said, 'If you will give me leave, madam, I will warm myself a few minutes at your kitchen fire, for it is really very cold.' . . . She then pulled off her gloves, and displayed to the fire two hands which had every property of snow in them, except that of melting."—*Tom Jones*, bk. x. ch. iii.]

[4] [For Ruskin's appreciation of Fielding, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 34, 51, and 82.]

[5] [Andrew Carrick Gow (*b.* 1848) became A.R.A. in 1881, and R.A. in 1891. There are several pictures by him in the Tate Gallery.]

Digitized by Google

89. War Time. (*B. Riviere.*[1])

Compare 626 at once ["The Last of the Garrison"]: the first is a true piece of feeling—almost Wordsworthian; the second, disgraceful to it, both in the low pitch of its vulgar horror and in its loss of power, by retreat to picturesque tradition, instead of dealing, like the other, with the facts of our own day.

If Mr. Riviere really feels as I think he feels, and means to do good, he must not hope to do anything with people who would endure the sight of a subject such as this. He may judge what they are worth by a sentence I heard as I stood before it. "Last of the garrison—ha! they're all finished off, you see: isn't that well done?" At all events, if he means to touch them, he must paint the cooking of a French pet-poodle; not the stabbing of a bloodhound.

214. The Crown of Love.[2] (*J. E. Millais, R.A.*)

Much of the painter's old power remains in this sketch (it cannot be called a painting); and it is of course the

[1] [Briton Riviere (*b.* 1840) became A.R.A. in 1879, and R.A. in 1881. For Ruskin's appreciation of his principal picture of 1878 ("Sympathy"), see the letter of June 10, 1880, on "A Museum or Picture Gallery," reprinted in *On the Old Road,* 1885, vol. i. § 502, and in a later volume of this edition. A small version of "Sympathy" is in the Tate Gallery, where also other pictures by Mr. Riviere may be seen.]

[2] [In this picture a hero bears his lady-love up a steep slope. The subject was borrowed from George Meredith's poem:—

"Oh might I load my arms with thee,
  Like that young lover of romance
Who loved and gained so gloriously
  The fair Princess of France!

Because he dared to love so high,
  He, bearing her dear weight, must speed
To where the mountain touched the sky:
  So the proud King decreed.

Unhalting he must bear her on,
  Nor pause a space to gather breath,
And on the height she would be won—
  And she was won in death!"]

Digitized by Google

leading one of the year in dramatic sentiment. This, then, it appears, is the best that English art can at the moment say in praise of the virtue and promise of the reward of Love; this, the subject of sentimental contemplation likely to be most pleasing to the present British public—torture, namely, carried to crisis of death in the soul of one creature and flesh of another. The British public are welcome to their feast; but, as purchasers, they ought to be warned that, compared with the earlier dual pictures of the school ("Huguenot," "Claudio and Isabella," "April Love," and the like[1]), this composition balances its excess of sentiment by defect of industry; and that it is not a precedent advantageous to them, in the arrangement of pictures of lovers, that one should have a body without a face, and the other a face without a body.

47. Hearts of Oak. (*J. C. Hook, R.A.*)

Beautiful, but incomplete; the painter wants more heart of oak himself. If he had let all his other canvases alone and finished this, the year's work would have been a treasure for all the centuries; while now it is only "the Hook of the season."

It looks right and harmonious in its subdued sunshine. But it isn't. Why should mussel-shells cast a shadow, but boats and hats none? Why should toy-carts and small stones have light and dark sides, and tall rocks none? I fancy all the pictures this year must have been painted in the sunless east wind; and only a bit of sunshine put in here and there out of the painter's head, where he thought it would do nobody any harm.

[1] [For Ruskin's references to Millais's "Huguenot," see Vol. V. p. 127; Vol. XI. p. 59; Vol. XII. p. 333. For Holman Hunt's "Claudio and Isabella," see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 49); *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, §§ 136, 138, (Vol. XII. pp. 160, 161); and *The Art of England*, § 6. For "April Love," by Arthur Hughes, see above, p. 68.]

Digitized by Google

112. A November Morning, etc.[1] (*H. T. Wells, R.A.*[2])

Fishermen's hearts being of oak, what are huntsmen's hearts made of? They will have to ascertain, and prove, soon; there being question nowadays among the lower orders whether they have got any to speak of.[3]

A pleasant aristocratic picture—creditable to Mr. Wells, and the nobility. Not a Vandyck, neither.

430. Sunday Afternoon. (*R. Collinson.*)

This picture, though of no eminent power in any respect, is extremely delightful to myself; and ought, I think, to be so to most unsophisticated persons who care for English rural life; representing, as it does, a pleasant and virtuous phase of such life, whether on Sunday or Saturday afternoon.

Why, by the way, *must* we accept it for Sunday? Have our nice old women no rest on any other day? Do they never put on a clean muslin kerchief on any other day? Do they never read their Bible (of course, it would be improper to suppose any other book readable by them) on any other day? Whatever day it be, here, at all events, are peace, light, cleanliness, and content.

Luxury even, of a kind; the air coming in at that door must be delicious, and the leaves outside of it look like a bit of the kitchen-garden side of Paradise. They please me all the better, because, since scientific people were good

[1] [At Birdsall House, Yorkshire. Testimonial hunt-picture, containing portraits of Lord and Lady Middleton, the Hon. Digby and Hon. Mrs. Willoughby, the Hon. Ernest Willoughby, etc.]

[2] [Henry Tamworth Wells (1828–1903) practised portraiture exclusively as a miniature painter up to 1861, when his first portrait in oils was exhibited. A.R.A. 1866, R.A. 1870.]

[3] [For Ruskin on hunting, see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vi. § 22; and in connexion therewith, a letter of January 15, 1870, on "The Morality of Field Sports," reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, ii. 184, and in a later volume of this edition; *Love's Meinie*, §§ 133, 137; *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 26; *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 37; and a letter on "The Lord's Prayer and the Church," reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1899, iii. § 228, and in a later volume of this edition.]

Digitized by Google

enough to tell us that leaves were made green by "greenleaf,"[1] I haven't seen a leaf painted green by anybody. But this peep through the door is like old times, when we were neither plagued with soot nor science.

Note, for a little piece of technical study in composition, that the painter would not have been able to venture on so pure colour outside of the door had he not painted the door green as well, only of a modified tint, and so led the subdued colour forward into the red interior, taken up again by the shadows of the plants in the window. The management of the luminous shadow throughout is singularly skilful—all the more so because it attracts so little attention. *This* is true chiaroscuro; not spread treacle or splashed mud, speckled with white spots—as a Rembrandt amateur thinks.

Mr. Pettie,[2] for instance, a man of real feeling and great dramatic power, is ruining himself by these shallow notions of chiaroscuro. If he had not been mimicking Rembrandt, as well as the "costume of the sixteenth century," in 318,[3] he never would have thought of representing Scott's entirely heroic and tender-hearted Harry of Perth (223), merely by the muscular back and legs of him (the legs, by the way, were slightly bandy[4]—if one holds to accuracy in anatomical respects); nor vulgarized the real pathos and most subtle expression of his Jacobites (1217) by the slovenly dark background,[5] corresponding virtually to the slouched hat of a theatrical conspirator. I have been examining the painting of the chief Jacobite's face very closely. It is nearly as good as a piece of old William Hunt; but Hunt never loaded his paint, except in sticks, and moss, and such like.

[1] [For another ironical reference to the scientific explanation that leaves are made green by "chlorophyll," see *Queen of the Air*, § 57, and *Proserpina*, ch. iii.]

[2] [John Pettie (1839–1893), A.R.A. 1867, R.A. 1873. A collection of his works was exhibited at the Academy in 1894. He is represented in the Tate Gallery by "The Vigil" (No. 1582).]

[3] [318. "Portrait in the Costume of the Sixteenth Century." 223. "Scene in Hal of the Wynd's Smithy." 1217. "Jacobites, 1745"; Mr. Pettie's Diploma picture.]

[4] [See *The Fair Maid of Perth*, ch. ii.: "His legs were slightly bent, but not in a manner which could be said to approach deformity."]

[5] [On the subject of backgrounds, see above, p. 117.]

Digitized by Google

Now there's a wrinkle quite essential to the expression, under the Jacobite's eye, got by a projecting ridge of paint, instead of a proper dark line. Rembrandt's bad bricklayer's work, with all the mortar sticking out at the edges, may be pardonable in a Dutchman sure of his colours; but it is always licentious; and in these days, when the first object of manufacture is to produce articles that won't last, if the mortar cracks, where are we?

To return to the question of chiaroscuro. The present Academicians—most of whom I have had anxious talk of, with their fathers or friends, when they were promising boys—have since been, with the best part of their minds, amusing themselves in London drawing-rooms, or Eastern deserts, instead of learning their business; with the necessary result that they have, as a body, qualified themselves rather to be Masters of Ceremonies than of Studies, and guides rather of Caravans than Schools; and have not got an inkling of any principle of their art to bless themselves—or other people, with. So that they have not only filled their large railroad station and stalls (attached refreshment room completing the nature of the thing) with a mass of heterogeneous pictures, of which at least two-thirds are beneath the level of acceptance in any well established dealer's shop;* but they have encouraged, by favour of position, quite the worst abuses of the cheap art of the day—of which these tricks of rubbing half the canvas over with black or brown, that the rest may come out handsomer, or that the spectator may be properly, but at the same time economically, prepared for its melancholy or sublime tenor, are among the least creditable either to our English wits or honesty. The portrait, No. 437,[1] for instance, is a very respectable piece

* I permit myself to name, for instance, not as worse than others, but as peculiarly disagreeable to myself, because I love monks, herons, and sea—450, 291, and 837.[2]

[1] [437. "Dr. Perry, first Bishop of Melbourne." Painted by subscription for the colony of Victoria (H. Weigall).]

[2] [450. "Steady, Brother, Steady!" (W. D. Sadler). 291. "Sport in the Olden Time" (W. Hughes). 837. "Give Way" (Colin Hunter).]

Digitized by Google

of painting, and would have taken its place well in the year's show of work, if the inkstand had not been as evanescent as the vision of Ezekiel, and the library shelves so lost in the gloom of art as to suggest symbolically, what our bishops at home seem so much afraid of—indistinctness in colonial divinity.[1] And the two highly moral pictures, 101 and 335,[2] which are meant to enforce on the public mind the touching theories that, for the labouring poor, grass is not green nor geese white, and that, on the pastoral poor, the snow falls dirty, might have delivered their solemn message just as convincingly from a more elevated stage of the wall-pulpit, without leaving on the minds of any profane spectator like myself the impression of their having been executed by a converted crossing-sweeper, with his broom, after it was worn stumpy.

If the reader is interested in the abstract qualities of art, he will find it useful at once to compare with these more or less feeble or parsimonious performances two pictures, which, if not high in attainment, are, at least, the one strong, and the other generous. 184. "Peasantry of Esthonia [West Russia] going to Market" (G. Bochmann) is masterly work, by a man practised in his business, but who has been taught it in a bad school. It is a true artistic abstraction of grey and angular natural facts; it indeed omits too much—for even in Esthonia there must be grass somewhere, or what could the horses eat?—and it omits the best things and keeps the worst: but it is done with method, skill, and a conscientious notion that to be grey and angular is to be right. And it deserves a place in an Academy exhibition.

[1] [Ruskin was warmly interested in the case of Bishop Colenso, who had been inhibited by the Bishop of Oxford from preaching in Carfax a few months before this pamphlet was written. See *Fors Clavigera*, 1875, Letter 49; 1876, 62; and *Letters to Ward*, ii. 58; and for other references to him, *Crown of Wild Olive*, § 35; *The Laws of Fésole*, ch. ix. § 8 (Vol. XV.); and a letter of September 18, 1865, reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, ii. 143, and in a later volume of this edition. In 1887 Ruskin presented a large crystal of diamond to the Natural History Museum "in honour of his friend, the loyal and patiently adamantine First Bishop of Natal."]

[2] [101. "The Bearers of the Burden" (G. H. Boughton, now R.A.). 335. "Hard Weather" J. H. E. Partington).]

Digitized by Google

On the other hand, 263, "Getting Better" (C. Calthrop[1]), is an intensely laborious, honest, and intentionally difficult study of chiaroscuro in two lights, on varied colour; and in all other respects it is well meant, and generously, according to the painter's power, completed. I won't say more of it, because at the height it hangs I can see no more; nor must the reader suppose that what I *have* said implies anything beyond what is stated. All that I certify is, that as a study of chiaroscuro it deserves close attention, much praise, and a better place than it at present occupies.

366. THE MAYOR OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE. (*W. W. Ouless.*[2])

An agreeable and vigorous portrait, highly creditable to the painter, and honourable to its subject and its possessors. Mr. Ouless has adopted from Mr. Millais what was deserving of imitation, and used the skill he has learned to better ends. All his portraits here are vigorous and interesting.

221. JOHN STUART BLACKIE. (*J. Archer.*[3])

An entirely well-meant, and I should conjecture successful, portrait of a man much deserving portraiture.[4] The background has true meaning, and is satisfactorily complete; very notable, in that character, among the portrait backgrounds of the year. The whole is right and good.

718. THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE. (*E. Clifford.*[5])

Mr. Clifford evidently means well, and is studying in the elder schools; and painting persons who will permit him to do his best in his own way.

There is much of interesting in his work, but he has

[1] [Claude Calthrop (1845–1893) had gained the gold medal at the Academy for historical work.]

[2] [Walter William Ouless (*b.* 1848), A.R.A. 1877, R.A. 1881].

[3] [James Archer (1822–1904), A.R.S.A. 1850, R.S.A. 1858, painter of historical and religious pictures; came to London in 1862, and afterwards devoted himself mainly to portraits.]

[4] [For Ruskin's acquaintance with Blackie in earlier years, see Vol. XII. p. xxxv.]

[5] [Edward Clifford (*b.* 1844), portrait-painter; also treasurer of the Church Army; visited Father Damien, 1888.]

Digitized by Google

yet to pass through the Valley of Humiliation before he can reach the Celestial Mountains.[1] He must become perfectly simple before he can be sublime; above all, he must not hope to be great by effort. This portrait is overlaboured; and, towards the finishing, he has not well seen what he was doing, and has not rightly balanced his front light against that of the sky. But his drawings always deserve careful notice.

317. MISS MARGARET STUART WORTLEY. (*A. Stuart Wortley.*[2])

The rightest and most dignified female portrait here—as Lady Coleridge's drawing of Dr. Newman, 1069, is the most subtle among those of the members of learned professions (though Mr. Laurence's two beautiful drawings, 1054, 1062,[3] only fall short of it by exhibiting too frankly the practised skill of their execution). 1052 is also excellent; and, on the whole,—thinking over these, and other more irregular and skirmishing, but always well-meant, volunteer work sprinkled about the rooms,—I think the amateurs had better have an Academy of their own next year, in which indulgently, when they had room to spare, they might admit the promising effort of an artist.

[1] [Mr. Clifford, it is said, wrote to Ruskin, "saying that he greatly valued the advice of so eminent a critic, and that he would be highly delighted to know what this phrase actually meant. Mr. Ruskin's reply was characteristically whimsical. He told his correspondent to take a tumbler, place it bottom upwards, put half-a-dozen cherries round the tumbler, and send him a water-colour sketch of the subject; and then he would tell him his meaning. The artist, manfully going into the Valley of Humiliation, did as he was bidden, and sent the sketch. Mr. Ruskin returned the sketch, quietly asking why the shadow of cherry number six had been made broader than the shadow of number five, whereas it ought to have been narrower. The ingenuous painter humbly replied that, although he might have made a mistake, his object had been to elicit from the great master of artistic criticism some definite explanation of the enigmatical phrase above quoted. The answer to this was not enigmatical: 'If you can't draw a cherry, why do you presume to paint women's heads?'" (*The Family Herald*, March 18, 1876).]

[2] [Arcibald Stuart Wortley, now a well-known portrait-painter, had in 1874 the privilege of practical lessons in painting from Millais (see *Life and Letters*, ii. 61).]

[3] [1504. "Sir Theodore Martin." 1062. "John Hodgkin, Esq." 1052. "Nineteen" (by Lady Coleridge). All three were portraits in crayons. Several similar portraits by Samuel Laurence (1811–1884) are in the National Portrait Gallery (*e.g.*, of F. D. Maurice and Thackeray). Lady Coleridge (Jane Fortescue Seymour, *d.* 1878) was the first wife of the Lord Chief-Justice.]

Digitized by Google

I have scarcely been able to glance round at the portrait sculpture; and am always iniquitously influenced, in judging of marble, by my humour for praise or dispraise of the model, rather than artist. Guarding myself, as well as I may, from such faultful bias, I yet venture to name 1342[1] as an exemplary piece of chiselling, carefully and tenderly composed in every touch. If the hair on the forehead were completely finished, this would be a nearly perfect bust. I cannot understand why the sculptor should have completed the little tress that falls on the cheek so carefully, and yet left so many unmodified contours in the more important masses.

1301. THOMAS CARLYLE. (*J. E. Boehm.*[2])

For this noble piece of portraiture I cannot trust myself to express my personal gratitude; nor does either the time I can give to these *Notes*, or their limited intention, permit me —if even otherwise I could think it permissible—to speak at all of the high and harmonious measure in which it seems to me to express the mind and features of my dear Master.

This only it is within the compass of my present purpose to affirm—that here is a piece of vital and essential sculpture; the result of sincere skill spent carefully on an object worthy its care; motive and method alike right; no pains spared, and none wasted. And any spectator of sensitiveness will find that, broadly speaking, all the sculpture round seems dead and heavy in comparison, after he has looked long at this.

There must always be, indeed, some difference in the immediate effect on our minds between the picturesque

[1] [1342. "Mrs. W. Cornwallis West": marble (G. Halse).]

[2] [Sir Joseph Edgar Boehm (1834–1890), born at Vienna, settled in London in 1862, and was afterwards naturalized. He was elected A.R.A. in 1878, and R.A. 1880. His work had a great vogue, and he was sculptor in ordinary to Queen Victoria. The portrait of Carlyle above noticed was a bust. The full-length seated statue, of which a replica in bronze is now in the gardens of Cheyne Walk, and which was probably Boehm's best work, was exhibited in 1882. Of Boehm's representation of Carlyle, Froude said that it was "as satisfactory a likeness in face and figure as could be rendered in sculpture; and the warm regard which had grown up between the artist and himself had enabled Mr. Boehm to catch with more than common success the shifting changes of his expression" (*Carlyle's Life in London*, ii. 460). Boehm also executed a medallion of Carlyle (see Garnett's *Carlyle*, p. 162). Boehm's bust of Ruskin is in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford.]

Digitized by Google

treatment proper in portrait sculpture, and that belonging, by its grace of reserve, to classical design. But it is generally a note of weakness in an Englishman when he thinks he can conceive like a Greek: so that the plurality of modern Hellenic Academy sculpture consists merely of imperfect anatomical models peeped at through bath-towels; and is in the essence of it quite as dull as it appears to be. Let us go back to less dignified work.

196. School Revisited. (*G. D. Leslie, A.*[1])

I came upon this picture early, in my first walk through the rooms, and was so delighted with it that it made me like everything else I saw that morning; it is altogether exquisite in rendering some of the sweet qualities of English girlhood, and, on the whole, the most easy and graceful composition in the rooms. I had written first, "masterly" composition; but no composition is quite masterly which modifies or subdues any of the natural facts so as to force certain relations between them. Mr. Leslie at present subdues all greens, refuses all but local darks, and scarcely permits himself, even in flesh, colour enough for life. Young ladies at a happy country boarding-school, like this, would be as bright as by the seaside; and there is no reason why a knowledge-gatherer, well cared for, should be less rosy than a samphire-gatherer.[2]

Rich colour may be in good taste, as well as the poorest; and the quaintness, politeness, and grace of Leslie might yet glow with the strength and freshness of Hook. It may perhaps be more difficult than I suppose to get the delicate lines and gradations, on which the expression of these girls mainly depends, in deeper colour. But, at all events, the whole should be more in harmony, and more consistently precious. English girls are, perhaps, not all of them,

[1] [For Ruskin's earlier notice of this artist, see above, p. 211.]
[2] [The reference is to the picture—"The Samphire-Gatherer"—by J. C. Hook, R.A., in the same exhibition.]

Digitized by Google

St. Dorothys; but at least they are good enough to deserve to have their rose-leaves painted about them thoroughly.[1]

The little thing on the extreme left, with the hoop, is as pleasant a shadow of Nature as can be conceived in this kind; and I have no words to say how pretty she is.

But Mr. Leslie is in the very crisis of his artist life. His earlier pictures were finer in colour; and colour is the soul of painting.[2] If he could resolve to paint thoroughly, and give the colours of Nature as they are, he might be a really great painter, and almost hold, to Bonifazio,[3] the position that Reynolds held to Titian. But if he subdues his colour for the sake of black ribands, white dresses, or faintly idealized faces, he will become merely an Academic leaf of the "Magazin des Modes."

For the present, however, this picture, and the clay portrait of Carlyle, are, as far as my review reaches, the only two works of essential value in the Exhibition of this year —that is to say, the only works of quietly capable art, representing what deserved representation.

English girls, by an English painter. Whether you call them Madonnas, or saints, or what not, it is the law of art-life—your own people, as they live, are the only ones you can understand.[4] Only living Venice, done by Venetian—living Greece by Greek—living Scotland, perhaps, which has much loved Germany, by living Germany which has much reverenced Scotland: such expansion of law may be granted;[5] nay, the strangeness of a foreign country making an artist's sight of it shrewd and selective, may produce a sweet secondary form of beautiful art—your Spanish Lewis, your French Prout, your Italian Wilson, and their like—second-rate nevertheless, always. Not Lewis, but only Velasquez,

[1] [The legend of St. Dorothea, who after her martyrdom sent to St. Theophilus a basket of roses from the Garden of Paradise, is the subject of a picture by Burne-Jones.]

[2] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 54); vol. v. pt. ix. ch. xi. § 8 *n.*; and *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. (Vol. XI. p. 220).]

[3] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 370).]

[4] [Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. pp. 229–231).]

[5] [As in the case of the portrait of Carlyle by Boehm.]

Digitized by Google

can paint a perfect Spaniard; not Wilson, nor Turner, but only Carpaccio, can paint an Italian landscape. And, too fatally, the effort is destructive to the painters, beyond all resistance; and Lewis loses his animal power among the arabesques of Cairo, Turner his Yorkshire honesty at Rome, and Holman Hunt—painting the "Light of the World" in an English orchard—paints the gaslight of Bond Street in the Holy Land.[1]

English maids, I repeat, by an English painter,—that is all that an English Academy can produce of loveliest. There's another beautiful little one, by Mr. Leighton, with a purple drapery thrown over her that she may be called Fatima (215 and 345),[2] who would have been quite infinitely daintier in a print frock, and called Patty. And I fear there are no more, to speak of, by artists,* this year; the two vivid sketches, 222, 262, being virtually put out of court by their coarse work.[3] (Look close at the painting of the neck in the one, and of the left hand in the other.) Of English men, there are the Mayor, and the Chemist;[4] a vigorous squire or two; and the group of grand old soldiers at Chelsea[5]—a most notable, true, pathetic study, but scarcely artistic enough to be reckoned as of much more value than a good illustrative woodcut. Mr. Watts's portraits[6] are all conscientious and subtle, and of great present interest, yet not realistic enough to last. Exclusively I return to my

* But see note on 317, p. 287.

[1] [Holman Hunt painted the background of the "Light of the World" in a farmhouse orchard in Surrey, working by candle-light from 9 P.M. till 5 A.M.—*Contemporary Review*, May 1886: see Vol. XII. p. 331 *n*.]

[2] [215. "Portion of the Interior of the Grand Mosque of Damascus." 345. "Little Fatima."]

[3] [Both pictures by Millais. No. 222 was Miss Eveleen Tennant (Mrs. F. W. H. Myers). No. 262, called "No!" was a portrait of her sister, Miss Dorothy Tennant (now Lady Stanley).]

[4] [For the Mayor, see above, p. 286; the reference to the Chemist is perhaps to a marble bust of W. A. Miller, M.D., F.R.S., late Professor of Chemistry in King's College (No. 1272 in the Exhibition).]

[5] [898. "The Last Muster: Sunday at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea." By H. Herkomer (*b*. 1849, A.R.A. 1879, R.A. 1890).]

[6] [Watts's portraits in the Academy of 1875 were—188. "Sir Edward Sabine, K.C.B." 193. "Mr. F. W. Walker" (now High-master of St. Paul's School). 420. "The Late Marquis of Lothian."]

Digitized by Google

Carlyle and the schoolgirls, as, the one, sure to abide against the beating of the time stream; and the other, possibly floating on it, discernible as a flower in foam.

NATURAL HISTORY

There ought to be a separate room in our Academy for the exhibition of the magnificent work in scientific drawing and engraving, done, at present, almost without public notice, for the illustrations of great European works on Palæontology, Zoology, and Botany. The feeling, on the part of our artists, that an idle landscape sketch, or a clever caricature, may be admitted into their rooms as "artistic"; and that work which the entire energy of early life must be given to learn, and of late life to execute, is to be excluded, merely because it is thoroughly true and useful, is I hope likely to yield, some day, to the scientific enthusiasm which has prevailed often where it should have been resisted, and may surely therefore conquer, in time, where it has honourable claims.[1]

There is nothing of the kind, however, to be seen here hitherto; but I may direct attention under this head, rather than that of landscape, to the exquisite skill of delineation with which Mr. Cooke has finished the group of palm trees in his wonderful study of sunset at Denderah (448).[2] The sacrifice of colour in shadow for the sake of brilliancy in light, essentially a principle of Holland as opposed to Venice, is in great degree redeemed in this picture by the extreme care with which the relations of light are observed on the terms conceded: but surely, from so low sunset, the eastern slopes of the mountains on the left could not have been reached by so many rays?

[1] [In this connexion, see *Lectures on Art*, iv. ("The Relation of Art to Use"), where Ruskin dwells on the duties and opportunities of art in relation to Natural History.]

[2] [443. "The Mountains and Plain of Denderah on the Libyan bank of the Nile; doum and date palms, trees," etc.]

Digitized by Google

To this division of our subject also must be referred Mr. Brett's "Spires and Steeples of the Channel Islands" (497), but with less praise; for since the days when I first endeavoured to direct the attention of a careless public to his conscientious painting of the Stonebreaker and Woodcutter,[1] he has gained nothing—rather, I fear, lost, in subtlety of execution, and necessitates the decline of his future power by persistently covering too large canvas. There is no occasion that a geological study should also be a geological map; and even his earlier picture, which I am honoured in possessing, of the Val d'Aosta,[2] would have been more precious to me if it had been only of half the Val d'Aosta.

The extreme distance here, however, beyond the promontory, is without any question the best bit of sea and atmosphere in the rooms. The paint on the water surface in the bay is too loaded, but laid with extreme science in alternations of colour.

At a still lower level, though deserving some position in the Natural History class for its essential, though rude, and apparently motiveless, veracity, must be placed "The Fringe of the Moor" (74).[3]

But why one should paint the fringe of the moor, rather than the breadth of it, merely for the privilege of carrying an ugly wooden fence all across the foreground, I must leave modern sentimentalists and naturalists to explain. Vestiges of the painter's former power of seeing true colour remain in the iridescent distance, but now only disgrace the gentle hillsides with their coarseness of harlequinade; and the daubed sky—daubed without patience even to

[1] [See above, p. 153.]
[2] [See above, p. 234.]
[3] [This picture, by Millais (now in the collection of Mr. Ismay), was painted in the autumn of 1874 "from the extreme end of the Rohallion ground, beyond the ruined village of Trochray, and close to Loch Kennard march. It used to be a favourite beat for black game" (*Life and Letters of Millais*, ii. 55). In a note on the Millais Exhibition of 1886, Ruskin made the following addendum to (or rather, emphatic repetition of) the criticism here:—

"The daubed sky—daubed without patience even to give unity of direction to the bristle marks—is without excuse, even in the rudest haste.—J. R., 1886."]

Digitized by Google

give unity of direction to the bristle marks—seems to have been wrought in obtrusive directness of insult to every master, principle, and feeling, reverenced or experienced, in the schools of noble art, from its nativity to this hour.

And, closing the equivocal group of works in which Naturalism prevails unjustly over art, I am obliged to rank Mr. Leighton's interesting study of man in his Oriental function of scarecrow (symmetrically antithetic to his British one of game-preserver), 398.[1] It is, I do not doubt, anatomically correct; and, with the addition of the corn, the poppies, and the moon, becomes semi-artistic, so that I feel much compunction in depressing it into the Natural History class; and the more, because it partly forfeits its claim even to such position, by obscuring in twilight its really valuable delineation of the body, and disturbing our minds, in the process of scientific investigation, by sensational effects of after-glow, and lunar effulgence, which are disadvantageous, not to the scientific observer only, but to less learned spectators. For when simple and superstitious persons like myself, greatly susceptible to the influence of low stage-lamps and pink sidelights, first catch sight of the striding figure from the other side of the room, and take it, perhaps, for the angel with his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the earth, swearing there shall be Time no longer;[2] or for Achilles alighting from one of his lance-cast-long leaps on the shore of Scamander;[3] and find, on near approach, that all this grand straddling, and turning down of the gas, mean, practically, only a lad shying stones at sparrows, we are but too likely to pass on petulantly, without taking note of what is really interesting in this Eastern custom and skill—skill which I would recommend with all my heart to the imitation of the British game-preserver aforesaid, when the glorious end of Preservation is to be accomplished in Battue. Good slinging would involve more

[1] ["Eastern Slinger scaring Birds in the Harvest-time: Moonrise."]
[2] [Revelation x. 5, 6.]
[3] [See *Iliad*, xxi. 251: Πηλεΐδης δ' ἀπόρουσεν ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ δουρὸς ἐρωή.]

Digitized by Google

healthy and graceful muscular action than even the finest shooting; and might, if we fully followed the Eastern example, be most usefully practised in other periods of the year, and districts of England, than those now consecrated to the sports of our aristocracy. I cannot imagine a more edifying spectacle than a British landlord in the middle of his farmer's cornfield, occupied in this entirely patriotic method of Protection.

The remainder of the pictures which I have to notice as belonging to the domain of Natural History, are of indubitable, though unpretending, merit. They represent indeed pure Zoology in its highest function of Animal Biography, which scientific persons will one day find requires much more learned investigation of its laws than the Thanatography which is at present their exclusive occupation and entertainment.

414. A Fascinating Tail. (*H. H. Couldery.*)

Quite the most skilful piece of minute and Düreresque painting in the exhibition[1]—(it cannot be rightly seen without a lens)—and in its sympathy with kitten nature, down to the most appalling depths thereof, and its tact and sensitiveness to the finest gradations of kittenly meditation and motion—unsurpassable. It seems hard to require of a painter who has toiled so much that, for this very reason, he should toil the more; but "The Little Epicure" (169) cannot be considered a picture till the cabbage leaves are as perfect as the fish.

1284. The First Taste. (*S. Carter.*[2])

Altogether enjoyable to me; and I am prepared to maintain (as a true lover of dogs, young and old), against

[1] [See above, p. 265.]
[2] [Samuel John Carter (1835–1892). A picture by him of deer is in the Tate Gallery (No. 1559).]

Digitized by Google

all my heroic and tragically-minded friends, that this picture is exemplary in its choice of a moment of supreme puppy felicity as properest time for puppy portraiture. And I thankfully—and with some shame for my generally too great distrust of modern sentiment—acknowledge, before it, that there is a real element of fine benevolence towards animals in us, advanced quite infinitely, and into another world of feeling, from the days of Snyders and Rubens.[1] "The Little Wanderers" (1178), by this same painter, are a most pathetic and touching group of children in the wood. You may see, if you will take your opera-glass to it, that the robin is even promising to cover them with leaves, if indeed things are to end, as seems too probable. And compare, by the way, the still more meek and tender human destitution, "To be Left till Called for," 83,[2] which I am ashamed of myself for forgetting, as one of the pretty things that first encouraged me to write these *Notes*. "Nobody's Dog"[3] may console us with his more cynical view of his position in the wide world; and finally, Miss Acland's Platonic puppy (787[4]) shows us how events of the most unexpected, and even astounding, character, may be regarded, by a dog of sense, with entire moral tranquillity, and consequently with undisturbed powers of reflection and penetration.

How strange that I cannot add to my too short list of animal studies any, however unimportant, of Birds! (I do not count as deserving notice at all dramatic effects of vulture, raven, etc.) Not a nest—not a plume! English society now caring only for kingfishers' skins on its hat, and plovers' eggs on its plate.

[1] [For Ruskin's strictures on the boar and lion hunts of these painters as "shameful to humanity," see *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vi. § 19.]
[2] [By A. Dixon.]
[3] [No. 427, by Miss E. L. Seeley.]
[4] ["The Intruder," by Miss A. Acland (daughter of Sir Henry Acland).]

Digitized by Google

LANDSCAPE

The distinction between Natural-Historic painting of scenery and true Landscape, is that the one represents objects as a Government Surveyor does, for the sake of a good account of the things themselves, without emotion, or definite purpose of expression. Landscape painting shows the relation between Nature and man; and, in fine work, a particular tone of thought in the painter's mind respecting what he represents.

I endeavoured, thirty years ago, in *Modern Painters*,[1] to explain this difference briefly, by saying that, in Natural History painting, the artist was only the spectator's horse; but, in Landscape painting, his friend.

The worst of such friendliness, however, is that a conceited painter may at last leave Nature out of the question altogether, and talk of himself only; and then there is nothing for it but to go back to the Government Surveyor. Mr. Brett, in his coast scene above noticed,[2] gives us things, without thoughts; and the fuliginous moralists above noticed, thoughts—such as they are—without things: by all means let us rather have the geographical synopsis.

415. Hoppers on the Road. (*W. Linnell.*)

This is a landscape, however; and, if it were more lightly painted, we might be very happy with it. Mr. Linnell cares no more than his father for brush dexterity; but he does no worse now, in that part of the business, than every one else. And what a relief it is, for any wholesome human sight, after sickening itself among the blank horrors of dirt,

[1] [The two great ends of landscape painting, said Ruskin in the first volume of *Modern Painters*, are the representation of facts and of thoughts. "In attaining the first end, the painter only places the spectator where he stands himself; he sets him before the landscape, and leaves him. The spectator is alone. . . . The artist is his conveyance, not his companion—his horse, not his friend" (Vol. III. p. 133).]

[2] [See p. 293; and for the following reference, p. 266.]

Digitized by Google

ditch-water, and malaria, which the imitators of the French schools have begrimed our various Exhibition walls with, to find once more a bit of blue in the sky and a glow of brown in the coppice, and to see that Hoppers in Kent can enjoy their scarlet and purple—like empresses and emperors!

1199. Summer Days for Me. (*A. W. Hunt.*)

I am at some pause in expressing my pleasure in the realization of this beautiful scene, because I have personal interest in it, my own favourite summer walk being through this very field.[1] As, however, I was far away at Assisi when the artist painted it, and had nothing whatever to do with either the choice or treatment of his subject, it is not indecorous for me to praise a work in which I am able so securely to attest a fidelity of portraiture, happily persisted in without losing the grace of imagination.

It is the only picture of the year which I saw in the studio, and that by chance; for it is one of my fixed laws not to look at pictures before they take their fair trial in the Academy. But I ventured to find fault with the sky. The sky was courteously changed to please me; but I am encroaching enough to want it changed more. "Summer days are" *not* "for me," unless the sky is blue in them, and especially unless it looks—what simple mortals too often make it in reality—a great way off. I want this sky to look bluer at the top, and farther away at the bottom. The brook on the right is one of the very few pieces of stream which, this year, have been studied for their beauty, not their rage.

256. Wise Saws. (*J. C. Hook, R.A.*)

I suspect that many, even of the painter's admirers, pass this pretty sketch without noticing the humour with which

[1] [This picture was painted in and from a riverside meadow near Coniston, not far from Brantwood. The artist had been staying with Ruskin, and one of the first walks they took was to the spot from which Mr. Hunt afterwards made this picture.]

Digitized by Google

he has expressed the gradations of feminine curiosity, scientific attention, and conscientious sense of responsibility, in the faces of the troop of cows who approach to investigate the nature of the noisy phenomenon upon the palings. It is a charming summer sketch, but scarcely worth sending to the Academy; and time was wasted by the good painter in carrying so far, what he felt his skill would be misapplied in carrying farther.

I am sure that Mr. Hook cannot lately have been reading his *Richard II.;* but whether the line quoted for his motto[1] chanced idly to occur to his memory, or was suggested to him by some acquaintance, he will, I trust, find a more decorous, as he easily may a more amusing, motto for his pretty cattle piece, before it becomes known in the picture-market as the parody of one of the most pathetic utterances in all Shakespearian tragedy.

123. On the River Mole. (*Birket Foster.*[2])

In doubt whether the spectator, without assistance, would see all the metaphysical distinctions between the cows in Mr. Hook's landscape, I need a more keen-sighted spectator's assistance to tell me, in Mr. Foster's, whether those animals on the opposite bank of the Mole are cows at all. If so, the trunks of the trees in the hedge beyond are about twenty yards in girth. What do our good water-colour painters mean by wasting their time in things like this (and I could name one or two who have done worse), for the sake of getting their names into the Academy catalogue?

[1] ["Am I both priest and clerk? Well then, amen" (Act iv. sc. 1).]

[2] [Myles Birket Foster (1825–1899), who became a member of the Old Water-Colour Society in 1862, was for many years one of the most popular water-colour artists. In *The Art of England* (Lecture iv.), Ruskin, after praising Mrs. Allingham's rustic idyls, makes "mention, with sincere gratitude, of the like motives in the paintings of Mr. Birket Foster; but with regret that in too equal, yet incomplete, realization of them, mistaking, in many instances, mere spotty execution for finish, he has never taken the high position that was open to him as an illustrator of rustic life."]

Digitized by Google

69, 81. The Horse-Dealer. Crossing the Moor.[1]

I have not looked long enough at these to justify me in saying more of them than that they should not be here on the line. That much I *must* say, and emphatically.

265. (I venture to supply a title, the painter seeming to have been at a loss.[2]) A Wild Rose, remarkable in being left on its stalk, demonstrates to the poet Campbell that there has been a garden in this locality.

Little thought I, when I wrote the first line of *Modern Painters*, that a day would come when I should have to say of a modern picture what I must say of this. When I began my book, Wilkie was yet living; and though spoiled by his Spanish ambition,[3] the master's hand was yet unpalsied, nor had lost its skill of practice in its pride. Turner was in his main colour-strength, and the dark room of the Academy had, every year, its four or five painted windows, bright as the jewel casements of Aladdin's palace, and soft as a kingfisher's wings. Mulready was at the crowning summit of his laborious skill; and the "Burchell and Sophia in the Hayfield," and the "Choosing of the Wedding Dress,"[4]

[1] [No. 69, by C. E. Johnson, landscape-painter (*b.* 1832). No. 81, by Peter Graham (*b.* 1836, A.R.A. 1877, R.A. 1881).]

[2] [This picture, by Millais, known as "The Deserted Garden," had no title in the catalogue, but a quotation was given from Campbell's lines, "Written on Visiting a Scene in Argyleshire":—

> "Yet wandering, I found on my ruinous walk,
> By the dial-stone, aged and green,
> One rose of the wilderness left on its stalk,
> To mark where the garden had been."

The picture was painted from the end of the upper garden terrace of St. Mary's Tower, Birnam. It is now in the possession of Mrs. Thwaites. "Never mind what other people may say about your picture," wrote Millais; "it is, and always will remain, one of the very best works I ever did" (*Life and Letters of Millais*, ii. 58).]

[3] [For Ruskin's early references to Wilkie, see *Poetry of Architecture* (Vol. I. p. 7), and *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. pp. 82, 91 *n.*); and for the painter's "Spanish ambition," see Vol. XII. p. 152.]

[4] ["Choosing the Wedding Dress," exhibited 1846, is now in the South Kensington Museum (Sheepshanks' collection). "Burchell and Sophia" (or "Haymaking") was exhibited in 1847. For another reference to these pictures, see *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 336).]

Digitized by Google

remain in my mind as standards of English effort in rivalship with the best masters of Holland. Constable's clumsy hand was honest, and his flickering sunshine fair. Stanfield, sea-bred, knew what a ship was, and loved it; knew what rocks and waves were, and wrought out their strength and sway with steadiest will. David Roberts, though utterly destitute of imagination, and incapable of colour, was at least a practised draughtsman in his own field of architectural decoration; loved his Burgos or Seville cathedral fronts as a woman loves lace; and drew the details of Egyptian hieroglyph with dutiful patience, not to show his own skill, but to keep witness of the antiquity he had the wisdom to reverence; while, not a hundred yards from the Academy portico, in the room of the Old Water-Colour, Lewis was doing work which surpassed, in execution, everything extant since Carpaccio;[1] and Copley Fielding, Robson, Cox, and Prout were every one of them, according to their strength, doing true things with loving minds.

The like of these last-named men, in simplicity and tenderness of natural feeling, expressing itself with disciplined (though often narrow) skill, does not, so far as I can see, now exist in the ranks of art-labourers; and even of men doing their absolute best according to their knowledge, it would be difficult to find many among the most renowned exhibitors of London and Paris;—while here, full on the line, with highest Academic name, and hailed by explosive applause from the whole nation, here is—— I cannot use strength of words enough to tell you what it is, unless you will first ascertain for yourselves what it is *not*.

Get what good you can of it, or anything else in the rooms to-day; but to-morrow, or when next you mean to come to the Academy, go first for half an hour into the National Gallery, and look closely and thoroughly at the painting of the soldier's helmet and crimson plume in John Bellini's "Peter Martyr"; at the horse-bridle in the

[1] [For Ruskin's "discovery" of Carpaccio, see Vol. IV. p. 356 *n*.]

Digitized by Google

large, nameless Venetian picture of the Madonna and kneeling Knight; at the herbage in the foreground of Mantegna's "Madonna"; and at Titian's columbines and vine in the "Bacchus and Ariadne."[1] All these are examples of true painter's work in minor detail; unsurpassable, but not, by patience and modesty, inimitable. There was once a day when the painter of this (*soi-disant*) landscape promised to do work as good. If, coming straight from that to this, you like this best, be properly thankful for the blessings of modern science and art, and for all the good guidance of Kensington and Messrs. Agnew. But if you think that the four-petalled rose, the sprinkle of hips looking like ill-drawn heather, the sun-dial looking like an ill-drawn fountain, the dirty birch tree, and the rest—whatever it is meant for—of the inarticulate brown scrabble, are not likely to efface in the eyes of future generations the fame of Venice and Etruria, you have always the heroic consolation given you in the exclamation of the *Spectator:* "If we must choose between a Titian and a Lancashire cotton-mill, give us the cotton-mill."[2]

Literally, here you have your cotton-mill employed in its own special Art-produce. Here you have, what was once the bone and sinew of a great painter, ground and carded

[1] ["Peter Martyr" is No. 812, and is by some attributed rather to Gentile Bellini; for other references to the picture, see *Verona and its Rivers*, § 27; *Aratra Pentelici*, § 221; and *Lectures on Landscape*, §§ 11, 77, 94. The "nameless Venetian picture" is No. 234, now ascribed to Catena. The Mantegna is No. 274; for another reference, see *Catalogue of the Educational Series*. The "Bacchus and Ariadne" is No. 35; for other references, see above, p. 21 *n*.]

[2] [The "exclamation" occurs in a review of Ruskin's Oxford *Lectures on Art*, August 6, 1870. The reviewer took up the statement (§ 123) that "before you can have a school of art, you must find places elsewhere than in England, or at least in otherwise unserviceable parts of England, for the establishment of manufactories needing the help of fire." The economic consequences of the literal adoption of this maxim were set forth, and the reviewer said: "Art is noble as the flower of life, and the creations of a Titian are a great heritage of the race; but if England could secure high art and Venetian glory of colour only by the sacrifice of her manufacturing supremacy, and by the acceptance of national poverty, then the pursuit of such artistic achievement would imply that we had ceased to possess natures of manly strength, or to know the meaning of moral aims. If we must choose between a Titian and a Lancashire cotton-mill, then, in the name of manhood and morality, give us the cotton-mill." Ruskin refers again to this passage in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 7.]

Digitized by Google

down into black-podded broom-twigs. That is what has come to pass upon him; that, *his* finding on his "ruinous walk" over the diabolic Tom Tiddler's ground of Manchester and Salford. Threshed under the mammon flail into threads and dust, and shoddy-fodder for fools; making manifest yet, with what ragged remnant of painter's life is in him, the results of mechanical English labour on English land. Not here the garden of the sluggard, green with rank weeds; not here the garden of the Deserted Village, overgrown with ungathered balm; not here the noble secrecy of a virgin country, where the falcon floats and the wild goat plays;—but here the withering pleasance of a fallen race, who have sold their hearths for money, and their glory for a morsel of bread.

231. THE QUARRIES OF HOLMEGROUND, LANCASHIRE. (*J. S. Raven.*)

The painter has real feeling of the sublimity of hill forms, and has made the most of his Langdale pikes. But it is very wonderful that in all this Academy, so far as I have yet seen, there is not a single patient study of a mossy rock. Now the beauty of foreground stone is to be mossy, as the beauty of a beast is to be furry; and a quarried rock is to a natural one what a skinned leopard is to a live one. Even if, as a simple painter, and no huntsman, one liked one's leopard or tiger better dead than alive, at least let us have him dead in his integrity; or—if so much as that cannot be—for pictorial purpose it is better to have, as in No. 697,[1] the skin without the tiger, than, as here, the tiger without the skin. (No. 697, by the way, should have been named in the Natural History class, for a good study as far as it reaches, and there may be more substantial drawing in it than I can see at the height where it is hung.)

Another sorrowful character in the mountain-painting of this year, is the almost total absence of any attempt to

[1] [697. "Tigers" (W. Huggins).]

Digitized by Google

render calm and full sunshine. 564 and 368[1] are, I think, the only exceptions, though scarcely worth noticing except as such; unless the latter, for the extreme and singular beauty of the natural scene it represents. The "Mountain Twilight," 759, W. C. Eddington, is evidently a pure and careful study of evening air among noble hills. What an incomparably ridiculous mob this London mob is!—to let some square leagues of room lie about its metropolis in waste brickfield, and occupy immeasurable space of wall with advertisements of pills and pictures of newly-opened shops; and lift a lovely little drawing like this simply—out of its way.

287. RICHMOND HILL. (*Vicat Cole, A.*[2])

The passages on the left, under the trees, of distant and subdued light, in their well-studied perfection, are about the most masterly things in landscape work in this exhibition; but has the painter never in his life seen the view from Richmond Hill on a clear day? Such a thing is still possible; and when it happens, is the time to paint that distance, or at least (for the passages on the left imply mist) when the indistinctness of it may be in golden mist, not gas fume. The last line quoted from Thomson[3] seems to have been written prophetically, to describe the England of our own day. But Thomson was never thinking of real smoke when he wrote it. He was as far from imagining that English landscape would ever be stifled in floating filth, as that the seasons should stop rolling, or April not know itself from November. He means merely the warm mist of an extreme horizon; and has at least given us something

[1] [564. "Near King's House, Glencoe" (T. G. Cooper). 368. "A Valley in Wales" (George Sant).]

[2] [George Vicat Cole (1833–1893, A.R.A. 1870, R.A. 1880).]

[3] ["What a goodly prospect spreads around
Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,
And glittering towns, and gilded streams, till all
The stretching landscape into smoke decays."]

Digitized by Google

to look at before we come to it. What has Mr. Vicat Cole done with all those hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires, which he leads us to expect?

I think I never saw a large picture so much injured by a little fault, as this is by the white wake of the farthest boat on the river. As a fact, it is impossible;—as a white line, it cuts all to pieces.

651. THE HEAD OF A HIGHLAND GLEN. (*F. C. Newcome.*[1])

The best study of torrent, including distant and near water, that I find in the rooms: 1075 ["Storm and Flood"] has been most carefully and admirably studied from Nature by Mr. Raven: only what is the use of trying to draw water with charcoal? and what makes nearly all the painters this year choose to paint their streams in a rage, and foul with flood, instead of in their beauty and constant beneficence? Our manufacturers have still left, in some parts of England and Scotland, streams of what may be advertised in the bills of Natural Scenery as "real water"; and I myself know several so free from pollution that one can sit near them with perfect safety, even when they are not in flood.

The rest of this mountain scene by Mr. Newcome is also carefully studied, and very right and good.

756. THE LLUGWY AT CAPEL CURIG. (*J. J. Curnock.*)

I find this to be the most attentive and refined landscape of all here—too subdued in its tone for my own pleasure, but skilful and affectionate in a high degree; and one of the few exceptions to my general statement above made, for here is a calm stream patiently studied. The distant woods and hills are all very tender and beautiful.

[1] ["Frederick Clive Newcome" (1847–1894), whose family name was Suker, exhibited for several years from 1875 onwards. He died at Coniston.]

Digitized by Google

686[1] is also a singularly careful and unassumingly true drawing; but are the town and rail not disquieted enough, that we should get no rest in a village?

POLICY

We finally inquire what our British artists have to say to us on the subject of good Government, and its necessary results—what triumph they express in the British Constitution and its present achievements.

In old times all great artistic nations were pictorially talkative, chiefly, next to religion, on the subject of Government. Venice, Florence, and Siena did little else than expound, in figures and mythic types, the nature of civic dignity, statesmanly duty, and senatorial or soldierly honour; and record, year by year, the events conducive to their fame.

I have not exhaustively overlooked the Academy; but, except Miss Thompson's study of a battle fought just "sixty years since,"[2]—I find no English record of any important military or naval achievement; and the only exhibition of the mode in which Britannia at present rules the waves is Mr. Cooke's "*Devastation*" being reviewed;[3] —somewhat sable and lugubrious as a national spectacle, dubious as a national triumph, and, to myself, neither in colour nor sentiment enjoyable, as the pictures of *Victorys* and *Téméraires* one used to see in days of simpler warfare. And of political achievement there seems still less consciousness or regard in the British artist; so that future generations will ask in vain for any aid to their

[1] ["Fair-Day, South Petherton, Somersetshire" (Miss L. Rayner).]

[2] [*Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since.* In the introductory chapter, Scott explains "how much the painter of antique or of fashionable manners gains over him who delineates those of the last generation." See below, p. 373.]

[3] ["No. 232. H.M. turret-ship *Devastation* at Spithead on the occasion of the naval review in honour of the Shah of Persia, July 23, 1873." Presented to the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, by the present Lord Brassey.]

Digitized by Google

imagination of the introduction of Dr. Kenealy to the Speaker,[1] or any other recent triumph of the British Constitution.

The verdict of existing British Art on existing British Policy is therefore, if I understand it rightly, that we have none; but, in the battle of life, have arrived at declaration of an universal *sauve qui peut*—or explicitly, to all men, Do as you like, and get what you can. Something other than this may, however, be gathered, it seems to me, from the two records given us of the war—so unwise, and yet so loyal—of sixty years ago.

618. La Charge des Cuirassiers Français à Waterloo. (*Philippoteau.*[2])

This carefully-studied and most skilful battle piece is but too likely to be overlooked in the confused rush to Miss Thompson's more attractive composition. And of all in the Academy, this is the picture which an Englishman, of right feeling, would least wish to overlook. I remember no so impartial and faithful representation of an historical battle. I know no war painting by the artists of any great race, however modest, in which the object has not hitherto been definitely—self-laudation. But here is a piece of true war history, of which it is not possible to say, by observance of any traceable bias, whether a Frenchman or Englishman painted it. Such a picture is more honourable to France than the taking of the Malakoff.

[1] [Edward Vaughan Kenealy (1819–1880), at that time notorious for his conduct as counsel for "the claimant" in the Tichborne case, had been elected at a by-election for Stoke-upon-Trent. He came to the table on February 18, 1875, to be sworn, without being introduced by two members, according to custom. The Speaker, in accordance with a resolution of the House passed in 1688, and uniformly observed since that time, called upon Dr. Kenealy to find two members to introduce him. A debate ensued; ultimately, on the motion of Mr. Disraeli, the resolution was dispensed with on that occasion, and Dr. Kenealy was called to the table and sworn. Feeling ran high against Dr. Kenealy, and it was explained that he had been unable to find two members willing to accompany him.]

[2] [Felix Emmanuel Henri Philippoteau (1814–1884).]

Digitized by Google

I never approached a picture with more iniquitous prejudice against it than I did Miss Thompson's:[1] partly because I have always said that no woman could paint;[2] and, secondly, because I thought what the public made such a fuss about *must* be good for nothing.

But it is amazon's work this; no doubt of it, and the first fine Pre-Raphaelite* picture of battle we have had;—profoundly interesting, and showing all manner of illustrative and realistic faculty. Of course, all that need be said of it, on this side, must have been said twenty times over in the journals; and it remains only for me to make my tardy genuflexion, on the trampled corn, before this Pallas of Pall Mall, and to murmur my poor words of warning to her, that she remember in her day of triumph how it came to pass that Atalanta was stayed, and Camilla slain.[3]

Camilla-like the work is—chiefly in its refinement, a quality I had not in the least expected, for the cleverest

* Miss Thompson may perhaps not in the least know herself for a sister of the school. But the entire power of her picture, as of her own mind, depends first on her resolution to paint things as they really are, or were, and not as they might be poetically fancied to be. See above, the note on 218, p. 267.

---

[1] [No. 853. "The 28th Regiment at Quatre Bras." Miss Elizabeth Thompson had become famous in 1874 by her "Roll Call." In 1877 she married the well-known soldier, traveller, and author, Sir William Butler. One of her pictures—"The Remnants of an Army"—is in the Tate Gallery (No. 1553).]

[2] [Thus in a letter of 1858 he had written:—

> "Dear Miss Sinnett,—I am quite delighted with your sketches, they are full of exquisite perception and feeling. You *must* resolve to be quite a great paint*ress;* the feminine termination does not exist, there never having been such a being as yet as a lady who could paint. Try and be the first. The sketches will come to-morrow early.—Most truly yours,
>
> "J. Ruskin."

(This letter was sold at Sotheby's, March 22, 1890, and re-sold there, April 9, 1891. It was printed in the *Daily Chronicle*, April 10, 1891. The date is fixed by the water-mark on the paper.) The partial recantation here expressed was confirmed and expanded by Ruskin a few years later, in consequence of his admiration for the drawings of Miss Francesca Alexander. (See *The Art of England*, Lecture i.)]

[3] [The story of Atalanta, who picked up the golden balls and was stayed in her course, is glanced at by Ruskin in *Val d'Arno*, § 19; he refers to Virgil's account of Camilla, who was tempted by success to dare too much, in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 76.]

Digitized by Google

women almost always show their weakness in endeavours to be dashing. But actually, here, what I suppose few people would think of looking at, the sky is the most tenderly painted, and with the truest outlines of cloud, of all in the exhibition; and the terrific piece of gallant wrath and ruin on the extreme right, where the cuirassier is catching round the neck of his horse as he falls, and the convulsed fallen horse just seen through the smoke below, is wrought, through all the truth of its frantic passion, with gradations of colour and shade which I have not seen the like of since Turner's death.

I place these two paintings under the head of "Policy," because it seems to me that, especially before the Quatre Bras, one might wisely consider with Mr. Carlyle, and with oneself, what was the "net upshot" and meaning of our modern form of the industry of war.[1] Why should these wild and well-meaning young Irish lads have been brought, at great expense, all the way to Four Arms, merely to knock equally wild and well-meaning young French lads out of their saddles into their graves; and take delight in doing so? and why should the English and French squires at the head of their regiments have, practically, no other object in life than deceiving these poor boys, and an infinite mob besides of such others, to their destruction?

Think of it. Suppose this picture, as well as the one I was so happy in praising of Mr. Collinson's, had been called—as it, also, quite properly might have been—"Sunday Afternoon" (only dating June 18th, 1815). Suppose the two had been hung side by side. And, to complete our materials for meditation, suppose Mr. Nicol's[2] "The Sabbath Day" (1159)—which I observed the *Daily Telegraph* called

[1] [See *Sartor Resartus*, book ii. ch. viii.: "What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net purpose and upshot of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five hundred souls. From these, by certain 'Natural Enemies' of the French, there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men," etc. Compare Ruskin's *Munera Pulveris*, preface. Passages in Ruskin dealing with the ethics of war (not always in the same sense as here) are numerous. See, *e.g.*, *Crown of Wild Olive*, Lecture iii.; *Two Paths*, § 196; *Modern Painters*, vol. iii., end of ch. xviii.]

[2] [Erskine Nicol (1825–1904), A.R.A. 1866.]

Digitized by Google

an] exquisitely comic picture,[1] but which I imagine Mr. Nicol meant for a serious one, representing the conscientious Scottish mountain-matron setting out for the place where she may receive her cake of spiritual oatmeal, baken on the coals of Presbyterian zeal;—suppose, I say, this ideal of Scottish Sabbath occupation placed beside M. Philippoteau's admirable painting of the Highland regiment at evening missionary service in that sweet and fruitful foreign land; while Miss Thompson enables us also, thus meditating in our fields at eventide, to consider, if not the Lilies, at least the Poppies of them; and to understand how in *this* manner of friction of ears of corn—by his bent knees instead of his fingers—the modern Christian shows that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath?[2]

"Well—and if this were so done—should we not feel that the peace of the cottage, and the honour of the mountain-side, were guarded and won for them by that mighty Evening Service, with the thunder of its funeral march rolled deep among the purple clouds?"

No! my soldier friends—no! do not think it. They were, and are, guarded and won by silent virtues of the hearth and the rock, which must endure until the time when the prayer we pray in our every Sabbath Litany—to be delivered from battle, murder, and sudden death—shall have been offered with sincere hearts, fervently; and so found its way at last to the audience of Heaven.

[1] [May 1, 1875: "Mr. Erskine Nicol's almost inimitably comic picture of an old Scottish dame going to the kirk on the Sabbath."]

[2] [Matthew vi. 28; Mark ii. 27.]

Digitized by Google

LIST OF ARTISTS AND WORKS

MENTIONED IN

"ACADEMY NOTES"

(1855–1859, 1875)

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—A General Index (of artists and pictures, not of topics) to Ruskin's series of *Academy Notes* was compiled in 1885 by Mr. John Morgan, of Aberdeen, and privately printed by him in two editions :—

First Edition (1885).—An octavo pamphlet of 16 pages, with the following title-page :—

> Mr. Ruskin's Notes | on some of | The Principal Pictures | Exhibited in the Rooms of the Royal Academy | etc., etc., | i.–vi. | 1855–1875.

On the reverse of the title-page is the imprint—"The Aberdeen University Press"; prefatory note (with blank reverse), pp. 3–4; text of the index, pp. 5–15. No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. Issued at Christmas, 1885, in pale blue wrappers, unlettered. Twenty-five copies were printed.

Second Edition (1890).—An octavo pamphlet of 16 pages, with the following title-page :—

> Index to Mr. Ruskin's Notes | on some of | the Principal Pictures | Exhibited in the Rooms of the | Royal Academy, | etc., etc., | Compiled by J. M. | Printed for Private Circulation Only. | Aberdeen. | 1890.

On the reverse of the title-page is the imprint—"The Aberdeen University Press"; on p. 3 the compiler's "Note," dated December 25, 1889; on p. 4, statement of the editions of the *Academy Notes* from which the index is compiled; text of the index, pp. 5–16. No headlines, the pages being numbered centrally. Issued in grey paper wrappers, lettered "Index to Mr. Ruskin's Academy Notes." Twenty-five copies were printed, and also ten on large paper (quarto). The whole thirty-five were numbered on p. 2 of the wrapper.

Mr. Morgan's Index was far from complete. A fuller index to *Academy Notes* was compiled in 1902 for the General Index in volume ii. of *Ruskin on Pictures* (pp. 353–375). So much of that index as refers to the pictures of painters who were mentioned in *Academy Notes* is here given. The other entries are incorporated in the General Index to this edition.]

Digitized by Google

LIST OF ARTISTS

AND WORKS MENTIONED IN "ACADEMY NOTES" (1855–1859, 1875)

[R.A. = *exhibited at the Royal Academy;* O.W.C.S., *Old (now Royal) Society of Painters in Water-Colours;* N.W.C.S., *New Society, etc. (now Royal Institute);* F.E., *exhibited at the French Gallery;* S.B.A., *Society of British Artists (now Royal Society, etc.);* B.I., *British Institution. Where two or more references to pages follow a picture, and the first is not the first in order of number, it is the principal reference.*]

ACLAND, Miss A.—
The Intruder (R.A., 1875), 296
Allingham, Mrs. (see also General Index)—
Young Customers (O.W.C.S., 1875), 264; *cf.* p. 409
Alma-Tadema, Sir Lawrence, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
The Sculpture Gallery (R.A., 1875), 271
Anelay, H.—
Anstey's Cove, South Devon (R.A., 1858), 171
Ansdell, Richard, *R.A.*—
Ploughing at Seville, 1857 (R.A., 1857), 115
Antigna, Alexandre—
Cherry-Seller of Port l'Abbé, Brittany (F.E., 1859), 251
The Pet Squirrel (F.E., 1859), 251
Archer, James—
John Stuart Blackie (R.A., 1875), 286
Armitage, Edward, *R.A.*—
Julian the Apostate presiding at a Conference of Sectarians (R.A., 1875), 268

BARWELL, F. B.—
The *London Gazette,* 1854 (R.A., 1855), 29
Adopting a Child (R.A., 1857), 116
Baxter, Charles—
Red Riding Hood (S.B.A., 1859), 255
Bennett, William (see also General Index)—
Drawings in the N.W.C.S., 1858, 191
Blunden, Miss A.—
Past and Present (R.A., 1858), 166
God's Gothic (R.A., 1859), 231
Bochmann, G.—
Peasantry of Esthonia going to Market (R.A., 1875), 285
Boddington, H. J.—
Llyn Givernen (S.B.A., 1857), 139
The Close of an Autumnal Evening (S.B.A., 1857), 139
The Windings of the Wye (S.B.A., 1858), 185
Boehm, Sir J. E., *R.A.*—
Bust of Thomas Carlyle (R.A., 1875), 288, 270, 290, 292
Bonheur, Rosa—
The Horse Fair (1853), 174
The Plough (F. E., 1858), 173
Booth, E. C.—
The Roadside Spring, Yorkshire (R.A., 1856), 49
Boughton, G. H., *R.A.*—
The Bearers of the Burden (R.A., 1875), 285
Boutibonne, E.—
Her Majesty the Empress Eugenie (R.A., 1856), 55
Boxall, Sir William, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Mrs. Coleridge (R.A., 1855), 8

Digitized by Google

Boyce, G. P.—
At a Farmhouse in Surrey (R.A., 1858), 162
The East Lynn at Middleham (R.A., 1859), 230
Boyce, Miss J. M. (Mrs. H. T. Wells)—
Elgiva (R.A., 1855), 30
Branwhite, Charles—
Sunset, Winter: a black frost (O.W.C.S., 1857), 127
A Mountain Torrent: late in autumn (O.W.C.S., 1858), 197
Brett, J., *A.R.A.* (see also General Index)—
The Stonebreaker (R.A., 1858), 153, 171, 293
Val d'Aosta (R.A., 1859), 234, 172, 238 *n.*, 293
Spires and Steeples of the Channel Islands (R.A., 1875), 293, 297
Brodie, W.—
Bust of Tennyson (R.A., 1857), 119
Buckner, R.—
The Countess della Torre (R.A., 1859), 217
Burgess, J. B., *R.A.*—
The Barber's Prodigy (R.A., 1875), 278
Burr, J.—
Domestic Troubles (R.A., 1875), 277
Burton, Sir Frederic William (see also General Index)—
Faust's First Sight of Margaret (O.W.C.S., 1857), 128
Burton, W. S.—
A Wounded Cavalier (R.A., 1856), 66
Butler, Lady (see also General Index)—
The 28th Regiment at Quatre Bras (R.A., 1875), 306, 308

Calderon, P. H., *R.A.*—
The Gaoler's Daughter (R.A., 1858), 167
Lost and Found (R.A., 1859), 239
Calthrop, Claude—
Getting Better (R.A., 1875), 286
Campbell, J.—
Eavesdroppers (S.B.A., 1856), 83
The Wife's Remonstrance (S.B.A., 1858), 187
Visit to the Old Sailor (S.B.A., 1858), 188
Our Village Clockmaker (R.A., 1859), 239
Carrick, J. M.—
The Village Postman (R.A., 1856), 58
Rydal (R.A., 1857), 113
Carrick, R.—
Thoughts of the Future (R.A., 1857), 100
Weary Life (R.A., 1858), 164
Carter, S.—
The First Taste (R.A., 1875), 295
The Little Wanderers (R.A., 1875), 296
Chisholme, A. C.—
Dressing for the First Party (R.A., 1855), 29
Clark, J.—
Private and Confidential (R.A., 1875), 279
Clifford, Edward—
The Countess of Pembroke (R.A., 1875), 286
Cockerell, P.—
Ready! (R.A., 1875), 273
Cole, Vicat, *R.A.*—
Richmond Hill (R.A., 1875), 304
Coleridge, Lady—
Dr. Newman (R.A., 1875), 287
Nineteen (R.A., 1875), 287
Collier, T. F.—
Russ, in the Dargle, co. Wicklow (R.A., 1857), 113
Collingwood, W.—
Sunrise on the Jungfrau (O.W.C.S., 1856), 82
Collins, C. A. (see also General Index)—
The Good Harvest of 1854 (R.A., 1855), 29
Collinson, James—
The Writing Lesson (R.A., 1855), 24, 21
Collinson, R.—
Sunday Afternoon (R.A., 1875), 282, 309
Cook, Samuel—
Trebarwith Sands (N.W.C.S., 1857), 138
The Rising of the Ground Sea, Trebarwith (N.W.C.S., 1858), 189
The Serpentine Rocks, Kynance Cove (N.W.C.S., 1858), 190
Hartland Point (N.W.C.S., 1859), 248
Close of Day and Early Morning, West Coast, Cornwall (N.W.C.S., 1859), 248
Cooke, E. W., *R.A.*—
Chioggian Fishing Vessels (R.A., 1856), 68
A Crab and Lobster Shore (R.A., 1857), 93
Morning after a Heavy Gale (R.A., 1857), 112
Sunset on the Lagune: St. Giorgio

Digitized by Google

in Alga and the Euganean Hills (R.A., 1858), 153, 169
H.M. Turret-Ship *Devastation* at Spithead (R.A., 1875), 306
The Mountains and Plains of Denderah on the Libyan bank of the Nile (R.A., 1875), 292
Cooper, Abraham, *R.A.*—
West Australian (R.A., 1856), 52
The Fusee (R.A., 1858), 219
Cooper, T. G.—
Near King's House, Glencoe (R.A., 1875), 304
Cope, C. W., *R.A.*—
Royal Prisoners, 1650 (R.A., 1855), 19
Penserosa (R.A., 1855), 20
Corbould, E. H. (see also General Index)—
Noah: a Miracle Play (N.W.C.S., 1858), 192
"A Dream of Fair Women" (N.W.C.S., 1859), 241
Couldery, H. H.—
A Fascinating Tail (R.A., 1875), 265, 295
The Little Epicure (R.A., 1875), 295
Cox, David (see also General Index)—
Driving the Flock (O.W.C.S., 1856), 78
Peat-Gatherers, N. Wales (O.W.C.S., 1856), 78
Twilight (O.W.C.S., 1856), 78
Wind and Rain (O.W.C.S., 1856), 78
Caernarvon (O.W.C.S., 1857), 123
Bolton Abbey (O.W.C.S., 1857), 123
Snowdon from Capel Curig (O.W.C.S., 1858), 195
Going to Market (O.W.C.S., 1858), 195
Waterfall (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Twilight (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Creswick, T., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
The River's Bank (R.A., 1855), 13
Autumn Morning (R.A., 1857), 106
Curnock, J. J.—
The Llugwy at Capel Curig (R.A., 1875), 305

Davidson, C. (see also General Index)—
Cornfield near Hastings (O.W.C.S., 1875), 125
Haymaking, Lewes (O.W.C.S., 1857), 125
Davis, William—
Early Spring Evening (R.A. 1855), 30, 32
Dearle, J. (see also General Index)—
Trout Stream in Wales (R.A., 1855), 28
Dearmer, T.—
Magpie Island (R.A., 1855), 33
D'Egville, J. H.—
San Clemente, Venice (N.W.C.S., 1857), 138
Delfosse, E.—
The Letter (R.A., 1856), 55
Dickinson, Lowes—
The Rev. F. D. Maurice (R.A., 1859), 232
Dillon, F.—
Emigrants on the Nile (R.A., 1858), 153, 162
Dixon, A.—
"To be Left till Called for" (R.A., 1875), 296
Dobson, W. C. T., *R.A.*—
Alms-deeds of Dorcas (R.A., 1855), 31
The Prosperous Days of Job (R.A., 1856), 67
The Going Down to Nazareth (R.A., 1857), 114
Reading the Psalms (R.A., 1857), 114
Fairy Tales (R.A., 1858), 157
Ishmael (R.A., 1858), 157
The Rose Garland (R.A., 1859), 224
Dodgson, G. H.—
Welsh Bridge and Torrent, Valley of the Lledr (O.W.C.S., 1857), 129
Duncan, Edward (see also p. 474 *n.*)—
Spithead, with part of the Baltic Fleet (O.W.C.S., 1856), 81
A Winter Scene: carting ice (O.W.C.S., 1858), 198
Dyce, W., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Christabel (R.A., 1855), 19
Titian preparing for his First Essay in Colouring (R.A., 1857), 98

Eagles, E.—
Il Ritorno della Contadina (S.B.A., 1857), 139
Eastlake, Sir C. L., *P.R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Beatrice (R.A., 1855), 13
Eddington, W. C.—
Mountain Twilight (R.A., 1875), 304

Digitized by Google

Egg, A. L., *R.A.*—
Come Rest in this Bosom (R.A., 1855), 14
Life and Death of the Duke of Buckingham (R.A., 1855), 15
A Wife's Infidelity (R.A., 1858), 166
The Night before Naseby (R.A., 1859), 216
Elmore, Alfred, *R.A.*—
The Emperor Charles V. at Yuste (R.A., 1856), 56
Emmerson, H. H.—
The Maid of Derwent (R.A., 1858), 161
Evans, William (of Bristol)—
Gates at the Villa Sommariva, Lake of Como (O.W.C.S., 1858), 196
Wastwater, Cumberland (O.W.C.S., 1858), 196
Near Sorrento: Morning (O.W.C.S., 1858), 196

Faed, Thomas, *R.A.*—
The Mitherless Bairn (R.A., 1855), 15
Highland Mary (R.A., 1856), 69
Home and the Homeless (R.A., 1856), 69
Sunday in the Backwoods (R.A., 1859), 224
Foster, Birket (see also General Index)—
On the River Mole (R.A., 1875), 299
Frère, Pierre Edouard (see also General Index)—
Cottage Studies (F.E., 1856), 83
Student (F.E., 1857), 142, 251
Luncheon (F.E., 1857), 142
Sempstress (F.E., 1857), 142
Prayer (F.E., 1857), 142 (see also p. 348)
The Gleaner Boy (F.E., 1858), 174
The Toilet (F.E., 1859), 251
Artisan's Family (F.E., 1859), 251
Cut Finger (F.E., 1859), 251
Wood Gatherers (F.E., 1859), 252
Fripp, Alfred Downing—
An Italian Cottage Door (O.W.C.S., 1858), 201
Church of St. Olivano (O.W.C.S., 1858), 202
Evening on the Abruzzi Mountains (O.W.C.S., 1858), 203
Fripp, George Arthur—
Part of the Ruins of Corfe Castle (O.W.C.S., 1856), 81
Scene at the Head of Glencoe (O.W.C.S., 1857), 125, 124
On the Derwent, Borrowdale (O.W.C.S., 1857), 126
Frith, W. P., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
At the Opera (R.A., 1855), 23
Many Happy Returns of the Day (R.A., 1856), 53
The Derby Day (R.A., 1858), 161
Sophia Western (R.A., 1875), 279
Frost, W. E., *R.A.*—
The Graces (R.A., 1856), 55
Narcissus (R.A., 1857), 93

Gastineau, Henry (see also General Index)—
Glenarm, co. Antrim (O.W.C.S., 1857), 126
St. Maurice (O.W.C.S., 1857), 127
Gilbert, Sir John, *R.A.*—
Queen Victoria inspecting the wounded Coldstream Guards (O.W.C.S., 1856), 78
Sir Andrew Aguecheek writes a Challenge (O.W.C.S., 1859), 241 *n.*
The Banquet at Lucentio's House (O.W.C.S., 1859), 241 *n.*
Glennie, A.—
View in the Forum of Rome (O.W.C.S., 1856), 81
Goodall, F., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Felice Ballarin reciting "Tasso" to the people of Chioggia (R.A., 1859), 225
Rachel and her Flock (R.A., 1875), 267
A Seller of Doves (R.A., 1875), 268 *n.*
Gordon, Sir J. W., *R.A.*—
Portrait of David Cox (R.A., 1856), 54
Gow, A. C., *R.A.*—
Lost: 1797 (R.A., 1875), 279
Graham, Peter, *R.A.*—
Crossing the Moor (R.A., 1875) 300
Guercino's "Hagar" in the Brera, 157

Haag, Carl—
In the Sabine Hills (O.W.C.S., 1858), 199
Arch at Spalatro (O.W.C.S., 1858), 204
Halse, G.—
Mrs. W. Cornwallis West (marble) (R.A., 1875), 288

Digitized by Google

Hannah, R.—
Master Isaac Newton in his Garden (R.A., 1856), 57
Harding, J. D. (see also General Index)—
View on the Banks of the Thames at Maidenhead (R.A., 1856), 67
Val St. Nicolas (O.W.C.S., 1857), 126
Hardy, F. D.—
An Interior (R.A., 1856), 59
Hart, S. A., *R.A.*—
Sacred Song (R.A., 1857), 97
Athaliah's Dismay at the Coronation of Joash (R.A., 1858), 158
Hay, Mrs. J. B.—
A Boy in Florentine Costume (R.A., 1859), 211
England and Italy (R.A., 1859), 211
Herbert, J. R., *R.A.*—
Lear Recovering his Reason at the Sight of Cordelia (R.A., 1855), 16
Mary Magdalene (R.A., 1859), 221
Herkomer, Hubert von, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
The Last Muster (R.A., 1875), 291
Hodgson, J. E., *R.A.*—
A Barber's Shop in Tunis (R.A., 1875), 279
A Cock Fight (R.A., 1875), 279
Holiday, Henry—
The Burgesses of Calais (R.A., 1859), 231
Hook, J. C., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Colin (R.A., 1855), 9
The Mother of Moses (R.A., 1855), 25
A Signal on the Horizon (R.A., 1857), 102
Ship-boy's Letter (R.A., 1857), 102
A Pastoral (R.A., 1858), 165
The Coast Boy gathering Eggs (R.A., 1858), 165
Luff, Boy! (R.A., 1859), 228
Brook of Human Life (R.A., 1859), 229
Hours of Listless Sway on Gentle Wave (or, "The Skipper Ashore") (R.A., 1859), 229
Hearts of Oak (R.A., 1875), 281, 265
Wise Saws (R.A., 1875), 298
The Samphire-Gatherer (R.A., 1875), 289
Horsley, J. C., *R.A.*—
The Novice (R.A., 1856), 59
Au Sixième (R.A., 1857), 92
Flower Girls—town and country (R.A., 1858), 166
Huggins, William—
Fowl and Pigeons (R.A., 1855), 25
Tigers (R.A., 1875), 303
Hughes, Arthur—
April Love (R.A., 1856), 68, 70, 281
The Eve of St. Agnes (R.A., 1856), 70
The Nativity (R.A., 1858), 162
The King's Orchard (R.A., 1859), 232, 163
Hughes, W.—
Sport in the Olden Time (R.A., 1875), 284 *n.*
Hunt, Alfred William (see also General Index)—
The Stream from Llyn Idwal, Carnarvonshire (R.A., 1856), 50
"When the Leaves begin to Turn" (R.A., 1857), 116
Snowdon after an April Hailstorm (R.A., 1857), 117
Time and Tide (R.A., 1857), 117
On the Greta (R.A., 1859), 230
Summer Days for Me (R.A., 1875), 298
Hunt, William Henry (see also General Index)—
An Itinerant (O.W.C.S., 1856), 79
Devotion (O.W.C.S., 1856), 79 (see also p. 447)
Fruit (O.W.C.S., 1856), 79
Fungi (O.W.C.S., 1858), 200, 203, 205 (see also p. 445)
View from Richmond Hill (O.W.C.S., 1858), 204
Peach and Grapes (O.W.C.S., 1858), 204
Fruit (O.W.C.S., 1858), 204
Pine Apple and Grapes (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
[*For list of drawings in the "Prout and Hunt" Exhibition*, see p. 452.]
Hunt, William Holman (see also General Index)—
Two Gentlemen of Verona (1851), 226
Claudio and Isabella (1853), 281
Strayed Sheep (1853), 65, 226
The Light of the World (1854), 65, 291
The Scapegoat (R.A., 1856), 61, 267
View from the Mount of Offence (R.A., 1856), 70
Jerusalem, by Moonlight (R.A., 1856), 70
The Sphinx, Ghizeh (R.A., 1856), 70

Digitized by Google

Hunter, Colin, *A.R.A.*—
Give Way (R.A., 1875), 284 *n.*
Hurlstone, F. Y.—
A Fisherman's Daughter of Mola di Gaeta (S.B.A., 1858), 187
Hamlet, Prince of Denmark (S.B.A., 1859), 241

Inchbold, J. W.—
The Moorland (R.A., 1855), 21
At Bolton (R.A., 1855), 22
A Study in March (R.A., 1855), 22
Mid-Spring (R.A., 1856), 59
The Burn, Cucullen Hills (R.A., 1856), 60
The Jungfrau (R.A., 1857), 96, 154 *n.*

Jackson, Samuel Phillips—
The Breakwater and Chapel Rock, Bude (O.W.C.S., 1856), 80
The Sands at Bude (O.W.C.S., 1856), 80
Sty Head Tarn, Cumberland (O.W.C.S., 1858), 198
Bamborough (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Johnson, C. E.—
The Horse Dealer (R.A., 1875), 300
Jutsum, Henry—
Flitting Shadows (R.A., 1855), 14

Knaus, Louis—
Bavarian Policeman, etc. (F.E., 1859), 252
Woman fetching her Husband from the Beerhouse (F.E., 1859), 253
Knight, C. P.—
Barley Harvest on the Welsh Coast (R.A., 1859), 222
Knight, W. H.—
The Broken Window (R.A., 1855), 21

Landseer, Sir Edwin, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Saved! (R.A., 1856), 54
Scene in Braemar: Highland Deer (R.A., 1857), 115
Deerstalking (R.A., 1858), 171
Laurence, S.—
Sir Theodore Martin (R.A., 1875), 287
John Hodgkin, Esq. (R.A., 1875), 287
Leader, B., *R.A.*—
A Stream from the Hills (R.A., 1857), 113

Lee, F. R., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
The Breakwater at Plymouth (R.A., 1856), 57
Breaking up a Wreck (R.A., 1856), 57
Le Hon, Henri—
Seashore at Blankenburg (F.E., 1858), 178 (see also p. xxvii.)
Leighton, Lord, *P.R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Cimabue's Madonna carried in Procession (R.A., 1855), 26, 33
Little Fatima (R.A., 1875), 291, 265
Portion of the Interior of the Grand Mosque of Damascus (R.A., 1875), 291
Eastern Slinger scaring Birds (R.A., 1875), 294
Le Jeune, H., *A.R.A.*—
Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre (R.A., 1856), 69
Leslie, C.—
A Break in the Clouds after the Storm (B.I., 1858), 187
Leslie, C. R., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Rape of the Lock (R.A., 1854), 38, 223
Sir Plume demands the Restoration of the Lock (R.A., 1855), 38
Sancho Panza and Dr. Pedro Rezio (R.A., 1855), 38
Sir Roger de Coverley in Church (R.A., 1857), 105
Jeanie Deans and Queen Caroline (R.A., 1859), 222
Hotspur and Lady Percy (R.A., 1859), 223
Leslie, G. D., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Reminiscences of the Ball (R.A., 1859), 211
Kin-le-Chson (R.A., 1859), 211
School Revisited (R.A., 1875), 289, 265, 292
Lewis, J. F., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
An Armenian Lady, Cairo (R.A., 1855), 12
The Greetings in the Desert (R.A., 1856), 52
Street Scene in Cairo (R.A., 1856), 53
Frank Encampment in the Desert (O.W.C.S., 1856), 73 (see also p. 340)

Digitized by Google

Syrian Sheikh, Egypt (R.A., 1857), 94
Harem Life, Constantinople (O.W.C.S., 1857), 130
A Kibab Shop, Scutari (R.A., 1858), 159
An Inmate of the Harem, Cairo (R.A., 1858), 159
Interior of a Mosque at Cairo (R.A., 1858), 159
Lilies and Roses (R.A., 1858), 159
Waiting for the Ferry Boat, Upper Egypt (R.A., 1858), 218
Lindsay, Thomas—
The Upper Wye (N.W.C.S., 1857), 137
Linnell, J. T.—
The Mountain Path (R.A., 1857), 100
Linnell, W.—
Hoppers on the Road (R.A., 1875), 297
Long, Edwin, *R.A.*—
The Babylonian Marriage Market (R.A., 1875), 274
Luard, J. D.—
A Church Door (R.A., 1855), 20
Lüben, A.—
The Beer Fish (R.A., 1875), 279

Maclise, Daniel, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
The Wrestling in *As You Like It* (R.A., 1855), 9, 16
Peter the Great (R.A., 1857), 95
Macnee, Sir David—
Portrait of Clarkson Stanfield, *R.A.* (R.A., 1859), 218
Marks, H. Stacy, *R.A.*, (see also General Index)—
A Merrie Jest (R.A., 1875), 278
The Jolly Postboys (R.A., 1875), 278
Meissonier, Louis Ernest (see also General Index, and pp. 381, 438, 447)—
The Study (F.E., 1858), 179
The Courtier (F.E., 1858), 179
Millais, Sir J. E., Bart., *P.R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Lorenzo and Isabella (R.A., 1849), 215
Christ in the House of His Parents (or, "The Carpenter's Shop") (R.A., 1850), 111, 215, 495
Mariana in the Moated Grange (R.A., 1851), 107, 495
The Return of the Dove to the Ark (R.A., 1851), 165, 215, 267
Ophelia (R.A., 1852), 107, 214
The Huguenot (R.A., 1852), 281
The Rescue (R.A., 1855), 22
Peace Concluded (or, "The Return from the Crimea") (R.A., 1856), 56, 107
Autumn Leaves (R.A., 1856), 56, 66, 86, 107
The Blind Girl (R.A., 1856), see pp. 114 *n.* and 327 *n.*
News from Home (R.A., 1857), 95
Sir Isumbras at the Ford (or, "A Dream of the Past") (R.A., 1857), 106
The Escape of a Heretic (R.A., 1857), 110, 215
The Vale of Rest (R.A., 1859), 212
Spring (or, "Apple Blossoms") (R.A., 1859), 214
The North-West Passage (R.A., 1874), 496
The Crown of Love (R.A., 1875), 280
Miss E. Tennant (R.A., 1875), 291
No! (R.A., 1875), 291
The Fringe of the Moor (R.A., 1875), 293
The Deserted Garden (R.A., 1875), 300
For the Squire (Grosvenor, 1883), 496
The Ornithologist (or, "The Ruling Passion") (R.A., 1885), 496
Moore, Albert—
A Flower Walk (R.A., 1875), 272
Pansies (R.A., 1875), 272
Moore, Henry, *R.A.*—
A Swiss Meadow in June (R.A., 1857), 104
Morgan, J.—
Mozart's Last Chorus (S.B.A., 1858), 185
Morris, P. R., *A.R.A.*—
Peaceful Days (R.A., 1858), 169
Mulready, W., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Burchell and Sophia (1847), 300
Choosing the Wedding-Dress (1846), 300
The Young Brother (R.A., 1857), 100
"Just as the Twig is bent, the Tree's inclined" (R.A., 1859), 221

Digitized by Google

Munro, Alexander (see also General Index—
Bust of Dr. Acland (R.A., 1857), 119
Mutrie, Miss A. F.—
Azaleas (R.A., 1855), 7
Primula and Rhododendron (R.A., 1855), 7
Orchids (R.A., 1855), 7
Orchids (R.A., 1856), 54
Roses (R.A., 1856), 54
Autumn Flowers (R.A., 1857), 115
Reynard's Glove (R.A., 1858), 168
Mutrie, Miss M. D.—
Geraniums (R.A., 1856), 54
Primulas (R.A., 1856), 54

Naftel, P. J.—
Collecting Vraic, Guernsey (O.W.C.S., 1856), 80
The Evening Gun at Castle Cornet, Guernsey (O.W.C.S., 1856), 80
One of Nature's Ferneries, Guernsey (O.W.C.S., 1857), 128
The Brook in Spring (O.W.C.S., 1857), 128
Lihou Island, near Guernsey (O.W.C.S., 1858), 200
Rocquaine Bay (O.W.C.S., 1858), 200
Grouse or Black Cock: Study in Glen Falloch (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Head of Loch Lomond (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Newcome, F. C.—
The Head of a Highland Glen (R.A., 1875), 305
Newton, A. P.—
Declining Day: View in Argyllshire (O.W.C.S., 1858), 201
Entrance to the Caledonian Canal (O.W.C.S., 1858), 201
Snow Scene (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Inverlochy Castle (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Nicol, Erskine, *A.R.A.*—
The Sabbath Day (R.A., 1875), 309

Oakes, J. W., *A.R.A.*—
Craig-dulyn, Carnarvonshire (R.A., 1857), 113
Caernarvonshire Hills from Anglesey (R.A., 1857), 115, 154 *n.*
The Warren (R.A., 1858), 169
Marchllyn-Mawr (R.A., 1859), 230
O'Neill, G. B.—
Market-Day (R.A., 1856), 68
Orchardson, W. Q., *R.A.*—
Too Good to be True (R.A., 1875), 279
Ouless, W. W., *R.A.*—
The Mayor of Newcastle-on-Tyne (R.A., 1875), 286

Palmer, Samuel (see also General Index)—
Going to India (O.W.C.S., 1858), 203
Partington, J. H. E.—
Hard Weather (R.A., 1875), 285
Paton, Sir Joseph Noel (see also General Index)—
Home (R.A., 1856), 50, 156
The Bluidy Tryste (R.A., 1858), 155
In Memoriam (R.A., 1858), 156
Pettie, John, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Portrait in the Costume of the Sixteenth Century (R.A., 1875), 283
Scene in Hal of the Wynd's Smithy (R.A., 1875), 283
Jacobites: 1745 (R.A., 1875), 283
Pettitt, J. P.—
Bettws-y-Coed (S.B.A., 1857), 139
Near Annecy (S.B.A., 1857), 139
The Studio, Foss Novyn, on the Conway (S.B.A., 1858), 186
Otter-Hunting at Pont-y-Parc, Bettws-y-Coed (S.B.A., 1858), 186
Philippoteaux, F. E. H.—
La Charge des Cuirassiers Français à Waterloo (R.A., 1875), 307
Phillip, J., *R.A.*—
El Paseo (R.A., 1855), 7
And the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick (R.A., 1856), 58
Agna Fresca (R.A., 1856), 59
Dona Pepita (R.A., 1856), 59
Gipsy Water-Carrier of Seville (R.A., 1856), 59
Daughters of the Alhambra (R.A., 1858), 168
A Huff (R.A., 1859), 216
Pickersgill, F. R., *R.A.* (see also General Index—
"Love's Labour Lost" (R.A., 1856), 49
Plassan, Antoine Emile—
Doctor's Visit (F.E. 1857), 141
The Music Lesson (F.E., 1858), 180
Poole, R. F., *R.A.*—
The Death of Cordelia (R.A., 1858), 158
Ezekiel's Vision (R.A., 1875), 266

Digitized by Google

Poynter, Sir E. J., *P.R.A.*—
The Festival (R.A., 1875), 273
The Golden Age (R.A., 1875), 273
Pyne, J. B. (see also General Index)—
Borromean Islands on the Lago Maggiore (S.B.A., 1858), 183

Rankley, A.—
The Evening Song (R.A., 1859), 227
Raven, J. S.—
Saintfoin in Bloom (R.A., 1859), 230
The Quarries of Holmeground, Lancashire (R.A., 1875), 303
Storm and Flood (R.A., 1875), 305
Rayner, Miss L.—
Fair Day, South Petherton, Somersetshire (R.A., 1875), 306
Redgrave, R., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
The Bird-Keeper (R.A., 1855), 20
Little Red Riding Hood (R.A., 1856), 52
The Emigrant's Last Sight of Home (R.A., 1859), 229
Richardson, T. M.—
Scene in Glen Nevis (O.W.C.S., 1857), 123
Catanzaro, the Capital of Calabria (O.W.C.S., 1857), 125
Richmond, George, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Sir Robert Harry Inglis (R.A., 1855), 18
The Dean of Westminster (Trench) (R.A., 1859), 218
Captain Sir Charles Hotham (R.A., 1859), 217
Riviere, Briton, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
War Time (R.A., 1875), 280
The Last of the Garrison (R.A., 1875), 280
Roberts, D., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Rome (R.A., 1855), 23, 34
Christmas-Day in St. Peter's (R.A., 1856), 48
Interior of the Duomo, Milan (R.A., 1857), 95
Interior of the Church of St. Gommaire, Lierre (R.A., 1857), 95
The Ducal Palace, Venice (R.A., 1858), 167
The Church of S. Maria della Salute (R.A., 1859), 220
Roberts, T.—
Child at Play (S.B.A., 1859), 255
Opinions of the Press (S.B.A., 1859), 255
Rosenberg, W. F.—
View in Glencoe (O.W.C.S., 1856), 81
Rowbotham, T. L.—
At Pallanza, Hazy Morning (N.W.C.S., 1857), 135
The Bay of Naples (N.W.C.S., 1858), 190
Cetara in the Gulf of Salerno (N.W.C.S., 1858), 191
East Cliff, Hastings (N.W.C.S., 1859), 248

Sadler, W. Dendy—
Steady, Brother, Steady! (R.A., 1875), 284 *n.*
Sant, George—
A Valley in Wales (R.A., 1875), 304
Sant, James, *R.A.*—
Eda (R.A., 1855), 31
Scheffer, Ary (see also General Index)—
Marguerite at the Fountain (R.A., 1858), 180
Scott, Sir George Gilbert, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Design for the Halifax Town Hall (R.A., 1857), 118
Seeley, Miss E. L.—
Nobody's Dog (R.A., 1875), 296
Smallfield, F.—
Little Peggy (S.B.A., 1857), 139
An Itinerant Shoeblack (S.B.A., 1857), 139
Roast-Chestnut Seller (S.B.A., 1858), 188
The Woodman's Boy (S.B.A., 1858), 188
The Strange Gentleman (R.A., 1858), 188
The May-Gatherer (R.A., 1858), 188
Smith, William Collingwood (see also General Index)—
Chillon (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249
Solomon, Abraham—
A Contrast (R.A., 1855), 24
Waiting for the Verdict (R.A., 1857), 114 (see also p. 327)

Digitized by Google

Stanfield, Clarkson, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Dutch Boats, Zuider Zee (R.A., 1855), 16
St. Sebastian: during the Siege, 1813 (R.A., 1855), 25
The Abandoned (R.A., 1856), 52
Port na Spania, Giant's Causeway (R.A., 1857), 104
Gulf of Salerno (R.A., 1857), 105
Old Holland (R.A., 1858), 155
A Maltese Xebec on the Rocks of Procida (R.A., 1859), 224 (see also p. 400)
Stanfield, G. C.—
At Berncastel, on the Moselle (R.A., 1857), 103
Stark, A. J.—
A Quiet Nook (R.A., 1857), 113
Stirling, J.—
Scottish Presbyterians: the Sermon (R.A., 1855), 24
Stone, Frank, *A.R.A.*—
Bon Jour, Messieurs (R.A., 1857), 112
The Missing Boat: Pas de Calais (R.A., 1858), 161
Sutcliffe, Thomas—
Early Spring (N.W.C.S., 1857), 138
Scene from Milton (N.W.C.S., 1857), 138
A Study in Winter, Adel Moor (N.W.C.S., 1858), 193
Syer, J.—
Mill near Aber, North Wales (S.B.A., 1858), 186

Taylor, Frederick (see also General Index)—
Huntsman's Boy and Bloodhounds (O.W.C.S., 1856), 79
Highland Gillie with Dogs and Black Game (O.W.C.S., 1858), 196
Otter-Hunting in the Highlands (O.W.C.S., 1858), 197
Telbin, W.—
Dovedale (N.W.C.S., 1859), 248
Thompson, Miss Elizabeth. *See* Butler, Lady
Tinworth, G.—
Terra-cottas representing Scenes in the Life of Christ (R.A., 1875), 270
Topham, F. W.—
At the Fountain (O.W.C.S., 1857), 130
Village Musicians, Brittany (O.W.C.S., 1857), 130
The Convent of San Francesco, Assisi, 1442 (R.A., 1875), 277
Trayer, Mons.—
Convalescent (F.E., 1857), 141
Troyon, Constant—
A Country Fair in France (F.E., 1859), 253
Turck, Miss E.—
Cinderella (R.A., 1856), 51
Turner, William (of Oxford) (see also General Index)—
Loch Garry, Inverness-shire: Autumn (O.W.C.S., 1856), 80
Loch Torridon, Ross-shire: before Morning (O.W.C.S., 1856), 80
A Lingerer (O.W.C.S., 1858), 198
View from Quiraing, Isle of Skye (O.W.C.S.), 1858), 198
Ben Cruachan (O.W.C.S., 1859), 249

Vacher, Charles—
The Kabyle Mountains at Sunset (N.W.C.S., 1857), 137
The Environs of Mesilah: First Hour of Night (O.W.C.S., 1857), 137
The Vesper Hour of Italy (O.W.C.S., 1857), 137
Bardj. Açouss (N.W.C.S., 1858), 189

Wallis, H. (see also General Index)—
Chatterton (R.A., 1856), 60
Andrew Marvell Returning the Bribe (R.A., 1856), 60
Montaigne (R.A., 1857), 113
Thou wert our Conscript (R.A., 1858), 153, 170
On the Ponte della Paglia: Going to the Council (R.A., 1875), 278
Ward, E. M., *R.A.*—
The Last Parting of Marie Antoinette from her son (R.A., 1856), 52
Ward, W.—
A Bird's Nest (S.B.A., 1857), 139
Warren, Edmund G.—
In the Forest of Dean (N.W.C.S., 1858), 192
Lost in the Woods (N.W.C.S., 1859), 247
Avenue, Evelyn Wood (N.W.C.S., 1859), 247

Digitized by Google

Warren, Henry—
Song of the Georgian Maiden (N.W.C.S., 1858), 191
The Peri (N.W.C.S., 1859), 246
Watts, G. F., *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Isabella (R.A., 1859), 239
Dedicated to all the Churches (or, "The Spirit of Christianity") (R.A., 1875), 266
Sir Edward Sabine, K.C.B. (R.A., 1875), 291
Mr. F. W. Walker (R.A., 1875), 291
The Late Marquis of Lothian (R.A., 1875), 291
Webbe, W. G.—
The White Owl (R.A., 1856), 51
Webster, Thomas, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Grace before Meat (R.A., 1858), 160
Sunday Evening (R.A., 1858), 160
Weigall, H.—
Dr. Perry, first Bishop of Melbourne (R.A., 1875), 284
Wells, H. T., *R.A.*—
At Birdsall House, Yorkshire. Testimonial Hunt Picture (R.A., 1875), 282
West, W.—
Waterfall, Romsdal, Norway (S.B.A., 1857), 139
On the Conway (S.B.A., 1857), 139
Tyn-y-Cae (S.B.A., 1857), 139
Whaite, H. Clarence—
Barley Harvest (R.A., 1859), 229
Snowdon (R.A., 1859), 230
Whymper, J. W.—
The Bass Rock (N.W.C.S., 1858), 189
Williams, C. F.—
The Rivals, from Clynnog Beach (R.A., 1858), 171
Windus, W. L.—
Burd Helen (R.A., 1856), 85, 233 (see also pp. 330, 331)
Too Late (R.A., 1859), 233, 239
Witherington, W. F., *R.A.*—
In Betchworth Park (R.A., 1855) 20
The Glen, Chudleigh, Devon (R.A., 1856), 60
Wolf, J.—
Covey (B.I., 1857), 140
Woolner, Thomas, *R.A.* (see also General Index)—
Medallion of Carlyle (R.A., 1857), 119
Bust of Tennyson (Manchester, 1857), 119
Wortley, A. Stuart—
Miss Margaret Stuart-Wortley (R.A., 1875), 287

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PART II

LETTERS AND PAPERS ON PICTURES AND ARTISTS

(1858–1887)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

1

PRE-RAPHAELITISM IN LIVERPOOL[1]

[1858]

I BELIEVE the Liverpool Academy has, in its decisions of late years, given almost the first instance on record of the entirely just and beneficial working of academical system. Usually such systems have degenerated into the application of formal rules, or the giving partial votes, or the distribution of a partial patronage; but the Liverpool awards have indicated at once the keen perception of new forms of excellence, and the frank honesty by which alone such new forms can be confessed and accepted. I do not, however, wonder at the outcry. People who suppose the Pre-Raphaelite work to be only a condition of meritorious eccentricity, naturally suppose, also, that the consistent preference of it can only be owing to clique. Most people look upon paintings as they do on plants or minerals, and think they ought to have in their collections specimens of everybody's work, as they have specimens of all earths or flowers. They have no conception that there is such a thing as a real right and wrong, a real bad and good, in the question. However, you need not, I think, much mind.

[1] [For the circumstances in which this letter was written, see above, Introduction, p. xxxi. The prize of the Liverpool Academy had been awarded to Millais's "Blind Girl." Popular feeling, however, favoured another picture, the "Waiting for the Verdict" of A. Solomon. As one of the judges, and as a member of the Academy, Mr. Alfred Hunt addressed a letter on the matter to Ruskin, the main portion of whose reply was sent by him to the *Liverpool Albion*, where it appeared on January 11, 1858. Mr. Solomon's picture had been exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1857 (No. 562), and is mentioned in Ruskin's *Notes* to the pictures of that year (see above, p. 114). Millais's picture is described by Ruskin in *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism*, § 4. The letter was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 108–109. "Rosetti" is here corrected to "Rossetti."]

Digitized by Google

Let the Academy be broken up on the quarrel; let the Liverpool people buy whatever rubbish they have a mind to; and when they see, as in time they will, that it *is* rubbish, and find, as find they will, every Pre-Raphaelite picture gradually advance in influence and in value, you will be acknowledged to have borne a witness all the more noble and useful, because it seemed to end in discomfiture; though it will *not* end in discomfiture. I suppose I need hardly say anything of my own estimate of the two pictures on which the arbitrement has arisen. I have surely said often enough, in good black type already, what I thought of Pre-Raphaelite works, and of other modern ones. Since Turner's death I consider that any average work from the hand of any of the four leaders of Pre-Raphaelitism (Rossetti, Millais, Hunt, John Lewis,) is, singly, worth at least *three* of any other pictures whatever by living artists.

JOHN RUSKIN.

Digitized by Google

2

GENERALIZATION AND THE SCOTCH PRE-RAPHAELITES

[1858]

To the Editor of the "Witness" [1]

I was very glad to see that good and firm defence of the Pre-Raphaelite Brothers in the *Witness* [2] the other day; only, my dear Editor, it appears to me that you take too much trouble in the matter. Such a lovely picture as that of Waller Paton's must either speak for itself, or nobody can speak for it. If you Scotch people don't know a bit of your own country when you see it, who is to help you to know it? If, in that mighty wise town of Edinburgh, everybody still likes flourishes of brush better than ferns, and dots of paint better than birch leaves, surely there is nothing for it but to leave them in quietude of devotion to dot and faith in flourish. At least I can see no other way of dealing. All those platitudes from the *Scotsman*, which you took the pains to answer, have been answered ten thousand times already, without the smallest effect,—the kind of people who utter them being always too misty in their notions ever to feel or catch an answer. You may as well speak to the air, or rather to a Scotch mist. The oddest part of the business is, that all those wretched fallacies about generalization might be quashed or crushed in

[1] [This letter appeared in the *Witness* (Edinburgh) on March 27, 1858, and was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 110–114.]

[2] [The defence was made in a second notice (March 6, 1858) of the Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy, then open to the public. The picture of Mr. Waller Paton (now R.S.A.) alluded to here was entitled "Wild Water, Inveruglas" (161); he also exhibited one of "Arrochar Road, Tarbet" (314). The "platitudes" of the *Scotsman* against the Pre-Raphaelites were contained in its second notice of the Exhibition (February 20, 1858).]

Digitized by Google

an instant, by reference to any given picture of any great master who ever lived. There never was anybody who generalized, since paint was first ground, except Opie, and Benjamin West, and Fuseli,[1] and one or two other such modern stars—in their own estimates,—night-lights, in fact, extinguishing themselves, not odoriferously at daybreak, in a sputter in the saucer. Titian, Giorgione, Veronese, Tintoret, Raphael, Leonardo, Correggio,—never any of them dreamt of generalization, and would have rejected the dream as having come by the horn gate,[2] if they had. The only difference between them and the Pre-Raphaelites is, that the latter love nature better, and don't yet know their artist's business so well, having everything to find out for themselves athwart all sorts of contradiction, poor fellows; so they are apt to put too much into their pictures—for love's sake, and then not to bring this much into perfect harmony; not yet being able to bridle their thoughts entirely with the master's hand. I don't say therefore—I never have said—that their pictures are faultless,—many of them have gross faults; but the modern pictures of the generalist school, which are opposed to them, have nothing else but faults: they are not pictures at all, but pure daubs and perfect blunders; nay, they have never had aim enough to be called anything so honourable as blunders; they are mere emptinesses and idlenesses,—thistledown without seeds, and bubbles without colour;[3] whereas the worst Pre-Raphaelite picture has something *in* it; and the great ones, such as Windus's "Burd Helen,"[4] will hold their own with the most noble pictures of all time.

Always faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[1] [For the "daubing" of West, see above, p. 160; and for "poor fumigatory" Fuseli, Vol. V. p. 108.]

[2] [There is some error here, as it is the *true* dreams that come through the horn gate, while the fruitless ones pass through the gate of *ivory: Odyssey*, xix. 562; compare *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 38).]

[3] [See Ruskin's preface to *Arrows of the Chace* (reprinted in a later volume of this edition), where he comments on these words.]

[4] [See above, p. 85.]

Digitized by Google

By the way, what ails you at our Pre-Raphaelite Brothers' conceits? Windus's heart's-ease might have been a better conceit, I grant you;[1] but for the conceits themselves, as such, I always enjoy them particularly; and I don't understand why I shouldn't. What's wrong in them?

[1] [The *Witness* had objected to the "astonishing fondness" of the Pre-Raphaelite school for "conceits," instancing as typically far-fetched that in the picture of "Burd Helen," where Lord John was represented "pulling to pieces a heart's-ease," as he crosses the stream.]

Digitized by Google

3

JOHN LEECH'S OUTLINES[1]

[1872]

I am honoured by the request of the sister of John Leech that I should give some account of the drawings of her brother, which remain in her possession; and I am able to fulfil her request without departing from the rule which has always bound me, not to allow any private interest to weigh with me in speaking of matters which concern the public. It is merely and simply a matter of public concern that the value of these drawings should be known and measures taken for their acquisition, or, at least, for obtaining a characteristic selection from them, as a National property. It cannot be necessary for me, or for any one now to praise the work of John Leech. Admittedly it contains the finest definition and natural history of the classes of our society, the kindest and subtlest analysis of its foibles, the tenderest flattery of its pretty and well-bred ways, with which the modesty of subservient genius ever amused or immortalized careless masters. But it is not generally known how much more valuable, as art, the first sketches for the woodcuts were than the finished drawings, even before those drawings sustained any loss in engraving.

John Leech was an absolute master of the elements of

[1] [From p. 4 of the *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Outlines by the late John Leech, at the Gallery, 9 Conduit Street, Regent Street, 1872.* The exhibition was held nearly eight years after Leech's death on October 29, 1864; for the circumstances of it, see above, Introduction, p. xxxii. Ruskin's letter was given *in extenso* in a review of the exhibition in the *Times* of May 8, 1872, and was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace,* 1880, vol. i. pp. 161–164. For other references to Leech, see *Modern Painters,* vol. iv. (Vol. VI. p. 471), and Lecture v., on Leech and Tenniel, in *The Art of England.*]

Digitized by Google

character—but not by any means of those of *chiaroscuro*,—and the admirableness of his work diminished as it became elaborate. The first few lines in which he sets down his purpose are invariably of all drawing that I know the most wonderful in their accurate felicity and prosperous haste. It is true that the best possible drawing, whether slight or elaborate, is never hurried. Holbein or Titian, if they lay only a couple of lines, yet lay them quietly, and leave them entirely right. But it needs a certain sternness of temper to do this.

Most, in the prettiest sense of the word, *gentle* artists indulge themselves in the ease, and even trust to the felicity of rapid—and even in a measure inconsiderate—work in sketching, so that the beauty of a sketch is understood to be consistent with what is partly unintentional.

There is, however, one condition of extreme and exquisite skill in which haste may become unerring. It cannot be obtained in completely finished work; but the hands of Gainsborough, Reynolds, or Tintoret often nearly approach completion at full speed, and the pencil sketches of Turner are expressive almost in the direct ratio of their rapidity.

But of all rapid and condensed realization ever accomplished by the pencil, John Leech's is the most dainty, and the least fallible, in the subjects of which he was cognizant. Not merely right in the traits which he seizes, but refined in the sacrifice of what he refuses.

The drawing becomes slight through fastidiousness, not indolence, and the finest discretion has left its touches rare.

In flexibility and lightness of pencilling, nothing but the best outlines of Italian masters with the silver point can be compared to them. That Leech sketched English squires instead of saints, and their daughters instead of martyrs, does not in the least affect the question respecting skill of pencilling; and I repeat deliberately that nothing but the best work of sixteenth-century Italy with the silver point exists in art, which in rapid refinement these playful English drawings do not excel. There are too many of them

Digitized by Google

(fortunately) to be rightly exemplary—I want to see the collection divided, dated carefully, and selected portions placed in good light, in a quite permanent arrangement, in each of our great towns in connection with their drawing schools.

I will not indeed have any in Oxford while I am there, because I am afraid that my pupils should think too lightly of their drawing as compared with their other studies, and I doubt their studying anything else but John Leech if they had him to study. But in our servile schools of mechanical drawing, to see what drawing was indeed, which could represent something better than machines and could not be mimicked by any machinery, would put more life into them than any other teaching I can conceive.

It is, therefore, with the greatest pleasure that I accept the honour of having my name placed on the committee for obtaining funds for the purchase of these drawings;[1] and I trust that the respect of the English public for the gentle character of the master, and their gratitude for the amusement with which he has brightened so many of their days, will be expressed in the only way in which expression is yet possible, by due care and wise use of the precious possessions he has left to them.

J. Ruskin.

[1] [The drawings were not, however, bought in the way suggested. In 1885 the three sisters of John Leech were given small pensions on the Civil List.]

Digitized by Google

4

ERNEST GEORGE'S ETCHINGS[1]

[1873]

To the Editor of the "Architect"

My dear Sir,—I am entirely glad you had permission to publish some of Mr. Ernest George's etchings;[2] they are the most precious pieces of work I have seen for many a day, though they are still, like nearly everything the English do best in art, faultful in matters which might have been easily conquered, and not a little wasteful, sometimes of means and time; I should be glad, therefore, of space enough in your columns to state, with reference to these sketches, some of the principles of etching which I had not time to define in the lectures on engraving I gave this year, at Oxford,[3] and which are too often forgotten even by our best draughtsmen.

I call Mr. George's work precious, chiefly because it

[1] [This letter appeared in the *Architect*, December 27, 1873, and was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 165–169. Mr. Ernest George (b. 1839), equally well known as architect and etcher (member of the Society of British Artists and of the Painter-Etchers), was awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1896.]

[2] [The number of the *Architect* in which this letter was printed contained two sketches from Mr. George's "Etchings on the Mosel,"—these, viz., of the Elector's Palace, Coblentz, and of the interior of Metz Cathedral. The intention of the *Architect* to reproduce these etchings had apparently been previously communicated to Ruskin, who wrote the present letter for the issue in which the etchings were to be given. Mr. George has since published other works of the same kind—*e.g.*, "Etchings in Belgium," "Etchings on the Loire" (see Ruskin's advice to him at the end of this letter, p. 338).]

[3] [The reference is to *Ariadne Florentina: Six Lectures on Wood and Metal Engraving given before the University of Oxford, Michaelmas Term, 1872*, and afterwards published, 1873–1876. The lectures given in the year 1873 were upon Tuscan Art, afterwards published as *Val d'Arno*.]

Digitized by Google

indicates an intense perception of points of character in architecture, and a sincere enjoyment of them for their own sake. His drawings are not accumulative of material for future use; still less are they vain exhibitions of his own skill. He draws the scene in all its true relations, because it delights him, and he perceives what is permanently and altogether characteristic in it. As opposed to such frank and joyful work, most modern architectural drawings are mere diagram or exercise.

I call them precious, in the second place, because they show very great powers of true composition. All their subjects are made delightful more by skill of arrangement than by any dexterities of execution; and this faculty is very rare amongst landscape painters and architects, because nearly every man who has any glimmering of it naturally takes to figure painting—not that the ambition to paint figures is any sign of the faculty, but that, when people have the faculty, they nearly always have also the ambition. And, indeed, this is quite right, if they would not forsake their architecture afterwards, but apply their power of figure design, when gained, to the decoration of their buildings.

To return to Mr. George's work. It is precious, lastly, in its fine sense of serene light and shade, as opposed to the coruscations and horrors of modern attempts in that direction. But it is a pity—and this is the first grand principle of etching which I feel it necessary to affirm—when the instinct of chiaroscuro leads the artist to spend time in producing texture on his plate which cannot be ultimately perfect, however laboured. All the common raptures concerning blots, burr, delicate biting, and the other tricks of the etching trade, merely indicate imperfect feeling for shadow.

The proper instrument of chiaroscuro is the brush; a wash of sepia, rightly managed, will do more in ten minutes than Rembrandt himself could do in ten days of the most ingenious scratching, or blurt out by the most happy

Digitized by Google

mixtures of art and accident.* As soon as Mr. George has learned what true light and shade is, (and a few careful studies with brush or chalk would enable him to do so,) he will not labour his etched subjects in vain. The virtue of an etching, in this respect, is to express perfectly harmonious sense of light and shade, but not to realize it. All fine etchings are done with few lines.[1]

Secondly,—and this is a still more important general principle, (I must let myself fall into dictatorial terms for brevity's sake)—Let your few lines be sternly clear, however delicate, or however dark. All burr and botch is child's play, and a true draughtsman must never be at the mercy of his copper and ink. Drive your line well and fairly home; don't scrawl or zigzag; know where your hand is going, and what it is doing, to a hair's-breadth; then bite clear and clean, and let the last impression be as good as the first. When it begins to fail, break your plate.

Third general principle.

Don't depend much on various biting. For a true master, and a great purpose, even one biting is enough. By no flux or dilution of acid can you ever etch a curl of hair or a cloud; and if you think you can etch the gradations of coarser things, it is only because you have never seen them. Try, at your leisure, to etch a teacup or a tallow candle, of their real size; see what you can make of the gradations of those familiar articles; if you succeed to your mind, you may try something more difficult afterwards.

Lastly. For all definite shades of architectural detail, use pencil or charcoal, or the brush, never the pen point. You can draw a leaf surface rightly in a minute or two

* The value of Rembrandt's etchings is always in the inverse ratio of the labour bestowed on them after his first thoughts have been decisively expressed; and even the best of his chiaroscuros (the spotted shell, for instance[2]), are mere child's play compared to the disciplined light and shade of Italian masters.

[1] [For another discussion of etching, see *The Cestus of Aglaia*, §§ 56 *seq.*]

[2] [For other references to this plate, see *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. p. 303), and *A Joy for Ever*, § 164.]

Digitized by Google

with these,—with the pen point, never, to all eternity. And on your knowing what the surface of a form is depends your entire power of recognizing good work. The difference between thirteenth-century work, wholly beautiful, and a cheap imitation of it, wholly damnable, lies in gradation of surface as subtle as those of a rose-leaf, and which are, to modern sculpture, what singing is to a steam-whistle.

For the rest, the limitation of etched work to few lines enables the sketcher to multiply his subjects, and make his time infinitely more useful to himself and others. I would most humbly solicit, in conclusion, such advantageous use of his gifts from Mr. George. He might etch a little summer tour for us every year, and give permanent and exquisite record of a score of scenes, rich in historical interest, with no more pains than he has spent on one or two of these plates in drawing the dark sides of a wall.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN RUSKIN.

Digitized by Google

5

THE FREDERICK WALKER EXHIBITION

[1876]

I

1. DEAR MR. MARKS,[1]—You ask me to say what I feel of Frederick Walker's work, now seen in some collective mass, as far as anything can be seen in black-veiled London. You have long known my admiration of his genius, my delight in many passages of his art. These, while he lived, were all I cared to express.[2] If you will have me speak of him now, I must speak the whole truth of what I feel—namely, that every soul in London interested in art ought to go to see that Exhibition, and, amid all the beauty and the sadness of it, very diligently to try and examine themselves as to the share they have had, in their own busy modern life, in arresting the power of this man at the point where it stayed. Very chief share they have had, assuredly. But he himself, in the liberal and radical temper of modern youth, has had his own part in casting down his strength,

[1] [This letter was written to H. Stacy Marks, R.A., in answer to a request that Ruskin would in some way record his impression of the Frederick Walker Exhibition, then open to the public. Frederick Walker died in June 1875, at the early age of thirty-five, only four years after having been elected an Associate of the Royal Academy. Marks sent the letter for publication to the *Times*, where it appeared on January 20, 1876. It was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 170–178, and again by Marks in his *Pen and Pencil Sketches*, 1894, vol. i. pp. 95–102. Marks' text, as compared with the *Times* and *Arrows*, shows a few minor variations, which have here been adopted. Thus in § 1, line 7, *Arrows* reads "will" for "must"; § 4, line 5, omits "who" before "ate"; § 5, line 8, reads "manor-house" for "manor-houses"; § 8, line 1, *Arrows* (reprinting the *Times*) reads "Fishmonger's Stalls" (952); Marks, "Fishmonger's Stall" (62); line 17, reads "and" for "but." The paragraphs are now numbered for convenience of reference.]

[2] [Ruskin, it seems, had talked in this sense; he had not published anything about Walker until the present letter.]

Digitized by Google

following wantonly or obstinately his own fancies wherever they led him.

2. For instance, it being Nature's opinion that sky should usually be blue, and it being Mr. Walker's opinion that it should be the colour of buff plaster, he resolutely makes it so, for his own isolated satisfaction, partly in affectation also, buff skies being considered by the public more sentimental than blue ones. Again, the laws of all good painting having been long ago determined by absolute masters, whose work cannot be bettered nor departed from —Titian having determined for ever what oil-painting is, Angelico what tempera-painting is, Perugino what fresco-painting is, two hundred years of noble miniature-painting what minutest work on ivory is, and, in modern times, a score of entirely skilful and disciplined draughtsmen what pure water-colour and pure body-colour painting on paper are, (Turner's Yorkshire drawing of Hornby Castle, now at Kensington, and John Lewis's "Encampment under Sinai,"[1] being nameable at once as unsurpassable standards); here is Mr. Walker refusing to learn anything from any of those schools or masters, but inventing a semi-miniature, quarter fresco, quarter wash manner of his own—exquisitely clever, and reaching, under such clever management, delightfullest results here and there, but which betrays his genius into perpetual experiment instead of achievement, and his life into woful vacillation between the good, old, quiet room of the Water-Colour Society, and your labyrinthine magnificence at Burlington House.

3. Lastly, and in worst error, the libraries of England being full of true and noble books—her annals of true and noble history, and her traditions of beautiful and noble—in these scientific times I must say, I suppose, "mythology" —not religion—from all these elements of mental education

[1] [The "Hornby Castle" was executed, together with the rest of the "great Yorkshire series," for Whitaker's *History of Richmondshire* (Longman, 1823). It was included in the Sheepshanks gift to the South Kensington Museum: for another reference to it, see Vol. XIII. p. 590. The picture of John Lewis here alluded to is described in Ruskin's *Academy Notes*, 1856, No. II.: see above, p. 73.]

Digitized by Google

and subjects of serviceable art, he turns recklessly away to enrich the advertisements of the circulating library, to sketch whatever pleases his fancy, barefooted, or in dainty boots, of modern beggary and fashion, and enforce, with laboriously symbolical pathos, his adherence to Justice Shallow's sublime theology that "all shall die."[1]

4. That theology has indeed been preached by stronger men, again and again, from Horace's days to our own, but never to so little purpose. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,"[2] said wisely in his way the Latin farmer, who ate his beans and bacon in comfort, had his suppers of the gods on the fair earth, with his servants jesting round the table, and left eternal monuments of earthly wisdom and of cricket-song. "Let us labour and be just, for to-morrow we die, and after death the Judgment," said Holbein and Dürer, and left eternal monuments of upright human toil and honourable gloom of godly fear. "Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, for to-morrow we die, and shall be with God," said Angelico and Giotto, and left eternal monuments of divinely-blazoned heraldry of Heaven. "Let us smoke pipes, make money, read bad novels, walk in bad air, and say sentimentally how sick we are in the afternoon, for to-morrow we die, and shall be made ourselves clay pipes," says the modern world, and drags this poor bright painter down into the abyss with it, vainly clutching at a handful or two of scent and flowers in the May gardens.

5. Under which sorrowful terms, being told also by your grand Academicians that he should paint the nude, and, accordingly, wasting a year or two of his life in trying to paint schoolboys' backs and legs without their shirts or breeches, and with such other magazine material as he can pick up of sick gipsies, faded gentlewomen, pretty girls disguised as paupers, and the red-roofed or grey remnants of old English villages and manor-houses, last wrecks of the

[1] [*2 Henry IV.*, Act iii. sc. 2.]
[2] [1 Corinthians xv. 32. For one of Horace's frequent expressions of the sentiment, see *Odes*, i. 11, 6.]

Digitized by Google

country's peace and honour, remaining yet visible among the black ravages of its ruin, he supplies the demands of his temporary public, scarcely patient, even now that he has gone, to pause beside his delicate tulips or under his sharp-leaved willows, and repent for the passing tints and fallen petals of the life that might have been so precious, and, perhaps, in better days, prolonged.

6. That is the main moral of the Exhibition. Of the beauty of the drawings, accepting them for what they aim at being, there is little need that I should add anything to what has been already said rightly by the chief organs of the London Press. Nothing can go beyond them in subtlety of exhibited touch (to be distinguished, however, observe always, from the serene completion of master's work, disdaining the applause to be gained by its manifestation); their harmonies of amber-colour and purple are full of exquisite beauty in their chosen key; their composition always graceful, often admirable, and the sympathy they express with all conditions of human life most kind and true; not without power of rendering character which would have been more recognized in an inferior artist, because it would have been less restrained by the love of beauty.

7. I might, perhaps, in my days of youth and good fortune, have written what the public would have called "eloquent passages" on the subjects of the Almshouse and the Old Gate;[1] being now myself old and decrepit, (besides

[1] [The following are the pictures, as catalogued, enumerated in the order in which they are mentioned here:—

1. "The Almshouse"—No. 52—called "The House of Refuge." Oil on canvas. A garden and terrace in quadrangle of almshouses; on left an old woman and girl; on right a mower cutting grass. Exhibited R.A. 1872. (Now in the Tate Gallery, No. 1391.)

2. "The Old Gate"—No. 48—oil on canvas. Lady in black and servant with basket coming through the gate of old mansion; four children at play at foot of steps; two villagers and dog in foreground. Exhibited R.A. 1869.

3. "The Cottage Gardens"—No. 71, "The Spring of Life." Water-colour. Lady in a garden with two children and a lamb; a cherry tree in blossom. Exhibited at the Water-Colour Society, Winter 1866–1867.

4. "Ladies and Lilies"—No. 37, "A Lady in a Garden, Perthshire." Water-colour. A lady seated on a knoll on which is a sun-dial; grey-hound on left; background, old manor-house. No. 67, "Lilies." Water-colour. Lady in a

Digitized by Google

being much bothered with beggars, and in perpetual feud with parish officers,) and having seen every building I cared for in the world ruined, I pass these two pictures somewhat hastily by, and try to enjoy myself a little in the cottage gardens. Only one of them, however,—No. 71—has right sunshine in it, and that is a sort of walled paddock where I begin directly to feel uncomfortable about the lamb, lest, perchance, some front shop in the cottages belong to a butcher. If only it and I could get away to a bit of thymy hillside, we should be so much happier, leaving the luminous—perhaps too ideally luminous—child to adorn the pathetic paddock. I am too shy to speak to either of those two beautiful ladies among the lilies (37, 67), and take refuge among the shy children before the "Chaplain's Daughter" (20)—delightfullest, it seems to me, of the minor designs, and a piece of most true and wise satire. The sketches of the "Daughter of Heth" go far to tempt me to read the novel;[1] and, ashamed of this weakness, I

garden watering flowers, chiefly lilies. Exhibited at the Water-Colour Society, Winter 1869–1870 and 1868–1869 respectively.

5. "The Chaplain's Daughter," No. 20, subject from Miss Thackeray's "Jack the Giant-killer." Exhibited at the Water-Colour Society, Summer 1868.

6. "Daughter of Heth," by W. Black. No. 87. "Do ye no ken this is the Sabbath?" Young lady at piano; servant enters hurriedly. (Study in black and white, executed in 1872.)—[See the novel, vol. i. p. 41. "'Preserve us a', lassie, do ye ken what ye're doing? Do ye no ken that this is the Sabbath, and that you're in a respectable house?' The girl turned round with more wonder than alarm in her face: 'Is it not right to play music on Sunday?'"]—(No. 131. Three more studies for the same novel.)

7. "The Old Farm Garden"—No. 33—Water-colour. A girl, with cat on lawn, knitting; garden path bordered by tulips; farm buildings in background. Painted in 1871.

8. "Salmon-fishers"—No. 47—"Fisherman and Boy"—Water-colour. Keeper and boy on bank of river. Glen Spean. Salmon in foreground. Exhibited at the Water-Colour Society, Summer 1867.

9. Mushrooms and Fungi—No. 41—Water-colour. Painted in 1873.

10. "Fishmonger's Stalls"—Nos. 9 and 62 (not 952)—viz., No. 9, "A Fishmonger's Shop." Water-colour. Painted in 1873; and No. 62, also "A Fishmonger's Shop." Water-colour. Fishmonger selling fish; lady and boy in costumes of about 1800. Exhibited at Water-Colour Society, Winter 1872–1873.

11. No. 68. "The Ferry." Water-colour. Sight size, 11¾ × 18 in. A ferry boat, in which are two figures, a boatman and a lady, approaching a landing-place; on the bank figures of villagers, and children feeding swans. Exhibited at Water-Colour Society, Winter 1870–1871.]

[1] [A little later Ruskin read another book by Black—*The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton*—and greatly admired it: see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 87.]

Digitized by Google

retreat resolutely to the side of the exemplary young girl knitting in the "Old Farm Garden" (33), and would instantly pick up her ball of worsted for her, but that I wouldn't for the world disappoint the cat. No drawing in the room is more delicately completed than this unpretending subject, and the flower-painting in it, for instantaneous grace of creative touch, cannot be rivalled; it is worth all the Dutch flower-pieces in the world.

8. Much instructed, and more humiliated, by passage after passage of its rapidly-grouped colour, I get finally away into the comfortable corner beside the salmon-fishers and the mushrooms; and the last-named drawing, despise me who may, keeps me till I've no more time to stay, for it entirely beats my dear old William Hunt in the simplicity of its execution, and rivals him in the subtlest truth.

I say nothing of the "Fishmonger's Stalls" (9 and 62), though there are qualities of the same kind in these also, for they somewhat provoke me by their waste of time—the labour spent on one of them would have painted twenty instructive studies of fish of their real size. And it is well for artists in general to observe that when they do condescend to paint still life carefully—whether fruit, fungi or fish—it must at least be of the real size. The portrait of a man or woman is only justifiably made small that it may be portable, but nobody wants to carry about the miniature of a cod; and if the reader will waste five minutes of his season in London in the National Gallery, he may see in the hand of Perugino's Tobias a fish worth all these on the boards together.[1]

9. Some blame of the same kind attaches to the marvellous drawing No. 68. It is all very well for a young artist to show how much work he can put into an inch, but very painful for an old gentleman of fifty-seven to have to make out all the groups through a magnifying glass. I could say something malicious about the boat, in consequence of the effect of this exertion on my temper, but will

[1] [No. 288. For other references to the picture, see Vol. XIII. p. 173 n.]

Digitized by Google

not, and leave with unqualified praise the remainder of the lesser drawings to the attention which each will variously reward.

10. Nor, in what I have already, it may be thought, too bluntly said, ought the friends of the noble artist to feel that I am unkind. It is because I know his real power more deeply than any of the admirers who give him indiscriminate applause, that I think it right distinctly to mark the causes which prevented his reaching heights they did not conceive, and ended by placing one more tablet in the street of tombs, which the passionate folly and uninstructed confusion of modern English society prolong into dark perspective above the graves of its youth.

I am, dear Marks, always very faithfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

II

HERNE HILL,
19*th January* 1876.[1]

11. DEAR MR. MARKS,—I am grateful to you for sending the letter as it stood, and trust that it may be as useful, in practical recommendation of the exhibition, as if it had been all friendly or laudatory. I do not wonder it disappointed you—it disappointed *me*—for I never know

[1] [To the letter printed above, Marks replied as follows:—

"15 HAMILTON TERRACE, N.W.,
"*January* 18, 1876.

"MY DEAR MR. RUSKIN,—I sent your manuscript to the *Times* early this morning, so perhaps we may see it in print to-morrow.

"If I also may speak 'the whole truth,' I would say that I read your notes with a feeling of disappointment. I had hoped that he who praised Frère so highly, finding in him 'the grace of Reynolds and the purity of Angelico' (I quote from memory), and who told us that 'if we are now to do anything great, good, or religious, it must be got out of our own little island, railroads and all' [*Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. p. 231)]—I had hoped, I say, that he who told us this would have found more to admire in the works of one so essentially English, and who has given us so many pure and exquisite renderings of childhood and womanhood. It may be that my friendship for the man has led me to overrate the painter, but I have been in company with his collected works some days while assisting to hang them, and they

Digitized by Google

what is in my head, now, till I look for it. But do not think it argues change of temper since I wrote the Frère review, or a wanton praise of one man and blame of another. Every syllable of my criticism, these last twenty years, is weighed like apothecaries' drugs, whether it be prussic acid (which I can't ever distil to the bitterness I want), or perfumery of the Rimmel-smoothest.[1] You all of you think I know nothing of my trade, pick out what you like, and say, "Well, for Ruskin, that's not so bad," and "What a fool that fellow is!" when it's what you don't agree with—and of course, that way, you never really understand a word I say.

12. I wrote of Frère, first, he had the "simplicity of Wordsworth."[2] Well, he lived in a village, loved it, and painted what he saw there. (Hook[3] has done something of the kind, though not so faithfully, for Clovelly.) But you don't suppose there's any "simplicity" in Walker! All those peasants of his are got up for the stage. Look at the flutter of that girl's apron under the apple-tree; look at the ridiculous mower, galvanised-Elgin in his attitude (and the sweep of the scythe utterly out of drawing, by the way). You don't suppose that flock of geese is done

grew upon me hourly, impressing more forcibly than ever the opinion I had long entertained that Walker was one of our greatest artists.

"And now, having said my say, I hope you will believe that I write this, not angrily, but sadly; and though I would have wished you could praise Walker more, I am not the less grateful to you for what you have said, and for the kind promptitude with which you have said it. Believe me to be, very faithfully yours,

"H. S. M."

In rejoinder, Ruskin sent the letter printed above; it is here reprinted from *Pen and Pencil Sketches*, by Henry Stacy Marks, R.A., 1894, vol. i. pp. 103–106. Marks in a further letter (*ibid.*, pp. 106–107) thanked Ruskin for the service which his *critique* in the *Times* had rendered to the Exhibition: "It cannot fail to draw many visitors. . . . In fact, I heard of people being in the gallery on Thursday afternoon with the letter cut from the paper, and alternately studying the words and the pictures."]

[1] [The allusion is to Eugène Rimmel, proprietor of well-known perfumery establishments in London and Paris, and author of *The Book of Perfumes* (1865).]

[2] [*i.e.*, in *Academy Notes* for 1857: see above, p. 142.]

[3] [See above, p. 9. "It was in 1854 Hook may be said to have discovered Clovelly by going there at the recommendation of Mr. Cope, R.A., and before the publication, in 1855, of Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* which directed all the world's eyes to the little cleft in the coast which looks upon the western sea and Lundy, a place for ever associated with our painter's name" (*James Clarke Hook*, by F. G. Stephens, p. 18).]

Digitized by Google

simply? It is elaborately affected—straining to express the feelings of a cockney who had never before seen a goose in his life, web-footed. You don't suppose those children in the "Chaplain's Daughter" are simple? They are as artificial as the Sistine Chapel, and *yet* he can't be content with them, but must put in his little fashionable wretch, to mix another flavour with them—and that a nasty one.

13. Again, I said of Frère, "He has the grace of Reynolds." At the time I wrote (he has much declined since) the masterful facility and serenity of Frère's broad touch were no less inimitable than Reynolds' was. Walker's, with all its skill, is an agony of labour. Look at the rose in the breast of Circe in the Old Masters;[1] it is worth all Walker's flower-beds in a row; and that was Frère's method of work when I wrote that review.

14. Lastly, I said he had "the holiness of Angelico." The picture I was speaking of, "The Prayer," is an entirely immortal work in representing the sacredest moment in the day of a peasant mother and child. But there is no evidence in the entire Walker exhibition that he ever had heard of such a thing as prayer. He seems to be one of your modern clique of Sons of Heth, who don't even know the religion of the Hittites.[2]

15. And lastly, you all of you fancy, I suppose, that I write heartlessly, and don't consider how dear and good and pleasant people were. But what business have you to mix up your hearts and brains in a mess? It is not because my affections are weak, but because they are much too strong to be mistaken for anything else, that I can keep clear of them—when their conversation is not wanted.

And I must not close my letter without asking you

[1] ["Portrait of Mrs. Nisbett as Circe," by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Painted in 1781 for the Earl of Bristol, and given by him to Sir John Stanley, Bart. Exhibited at the Old Masters Exhibition, 1876, by the Dowager Lady Stanley of Alderley.]

[2] [The allusion to the Sons of Heth (that is, the Hittites) was suggested by Walker's drawing "Daughter of Heth" (p. 343). Ruskin uses the term as of those who are aliens to the commonwealth of Israel (Genesis xxvii. 46—a verse which was the motto of Black's novel), yet are not downright enemies, nor evilly disposed (see Genesis xxiii.).]

Digitized by Google

to believe that it is owing to what I know of your own kindness of heart that I take these pains to justify myself to you for what I have written; for although for the moment it may give you more pain that I should thus further insist on the failings of your friend's work, I trust you will ultimately have more contentment in knowing that I cared for you both, and wrote with extreme earnestness and deliberation, than in remaining under any impression of having merely drawn me into an ebullition of momentary ill-temper. And I trust that you will kindly accept the expression of my friendly feeling to yourself, and continue to think of me as faithfully yours,

J. Ruskin.

H. Stacy Marks, Esq.

Digitized by Google

6

ARTHUR BURGESS[1]

[1887]

1. I do not know how many years ago, but sadly many, came among the morning letters to Denmark Hill, one containing a richly-wrought dark woodcut,—of—I could not make out exactly what,—and don't remember now what it turned out to be,—but it was by a fine workman's attentive mind and hand, that much was certain; and with it was a little note, to this effect, in words, if not these following, at least as modest and simple: "I can cut wood like this, and am overworked, and cannot make my living,—can you help me?—Arthur Burgess."

I answered by return post, asking him to come and see me.

The grave face, honest but reserved, distressed but unconquerable, vivid yet hopeless, with the high, full, forward, but strainedly narrow forehead, impressed me as much as a face ever did, but extremely embarrassed me, inexplicable as the woodcut; but certainly full of good in its vague way. After some talk, I found that though he had original faculty, it had no special direction, nor any yet well struck root; he had been variously bound, embittered, and wounded in the ugly prison-house of London labour—done with all the strength of nerve in him, and with no help from his own heart or any one else's. I saw the first things he needed were rest, and a little sympathy and field for his manual

[1] [This paper appeared (with the plates here given) in *The Century Guild Hobby Horse*, 1887, vol. ii. pp. 46–53. It has not heretofore been reprinted; the numbering of the paragraphs is here introduced. For Burgess, see also Introduction, p. xxxii. The woodcut inserted on p. 350 was done by Burgess for Ruskin from an illuminated manuscript.]

Digitized by Google

skill. It chanced that I was much set on botanical work at the time, so I asked him to come up in the forenoons, and make drawings from my old-fashioned botanical books, or from real flowers, such as he would have pleasure in engraving, for *Proserpina*.

2. And soon we got into a quiet and prosperous way of work together: but there was always reserve on his side—always puzzlement on mine. I did not like enslaving him to botanical woodcut, nor was I myself so set on floral study as to make it a sure line of life for him. Other chances and fancies interfered, dolorously, with the peace of those summers, between 1860 and 1870,—they were when I had finished *Modern Painters*, and saw it was not of the least use:[1] while the reception of the more serious thought I had given to *Munera Pulveris* angered and paralysed me, so that I had no good spirit to guide my poor friend with. In 1867 the first warning mischief to my own health showed itself, giddiness and mistiness of head and eyes, which stopped alike my drawing and thinking to any good purpose.[2] I went down into Cumberland

[1] [A despondent view expressed by Ruskin in 1869 in his lecture on "The Mystery of Life and its Arts" (*Sesame and Lilies*, §§ 101, 102). Details of the biographical facts and feelings, here alluded to, will be found in the Introductions to later volumes.]

[2] [For the illness of 1867, see Introduction to the volume containing *Time and Tide*.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

p. 350

Botanical Studies

A. Burgess, Sc.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

and walked and rowed till I was well again, but don't know what poor Burgess did, except that — so far as I know—he would not have fallen into extreme distress without telling me. In 1869, after much vacillation and loss of impetus, I went to Verona to study the Scala Tombs, and took Arthur with me.[1] Partly by his own good instincts and power, partly, I am vain enough to think, under my teaching, he had become by that time such a draughtsman in black and white as I never knew the match of, with gifts of mechanical ingenuity and mathematical intelligence in the highest degree precious to me. If he had been quite happy in his work, and I quite resolute in mine, and we had settled ourselves to do Verona—Padua—Parma—together, there had been good news of us—there and elsewhere.

8. "Dis aliter?"[2]—by no means; "Dæmonibus aliter"—I should once have said; but my dear friend Henry Willett[3] declares there is no Devil,—and I am myself of the same mind so far at least as to be angry with myself instead of Him:—and sorry only for the want of Vision in my own mind, not in the least reproaching the Vision of Fate. Arthur did everything I wanted of him at Verona in perfectness. He drew the mouldings of the Scala Tombs as never architecture had been drawn before; he collated and corrected my measurements; he climbed where I could not; and at last made a model in clay of every separate stone in the Castelbarco Tomb,[4] showing that without any cement the whole fabric stood on its four pillars with entire security, —the iron binding bars above the capitals being needful only as security against vibration. But all this he did without joy, with beautiful fidelity and pride in doing well, but not seeing what the work might come to, or perhaps too wisely foreseeing that it could come to nothing. At last—

[1] [Several of the drawings made by Burgess on this visit were shown at the Royal Institution in 1870, to illustrate Ruskin's lecture on *Verona and its Rivers*.]

[2] [Virgil, *Æn.* ii. 428.]

[3] [Mr. Henry Willett, of Arnold House, Brighton, a collector of works by Turner and Ruskin. For references to him, see *Two Paths* (preface of 1878); *Ethics of the Dust* (preface to ed. 2); and *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 64, 85, 86.]

[4] [See Vol. IX. p. 176.]

Digitized by Google

on an excursion to Venice—his small room opening on a stagnant canal, he fell into a fit of delirious fever, through which my servant, Frederick Crawley,[1] nursed him bravely, and brought him back to me, but then glad to be sent home. For the rest, I had received at Verona the offer of the Slade Professorship—and foolishly accepted it. My simple duty at that time was to have stayed with my widowed mother at Denmark Hill, doing whatever my hand found to do there. Mixed vanity, hope of wider usefulness, and partly her pleasure in my being at Oxford again, took me away from her, and from myself.

4. Mr. Burgess came down sometimes to Oxford to help me in diagram and other drawing, and formed his own circle of friends there;—I am thankful to associate with the expression of my own imperfect, blind, and unserviceable affection, that of the deeper feeling of one[2] who cared for him to the end.

"I remember well the first time that I met Arthur Burgess, one evening at a man's rooms in Queen's. He asked me to breakfast with him, I think it was the next morning, at the Roebuck. I not only breakfasted with him, we spent the whole day together; we went out for a long walk, talking of Art, of Religion, of all manner of things. Immediately and immensely I was attracted by him, attracted by his width of view, his serious feeling, his quick humour, which was abounding, attracted perhaps above all by his generous acceptance of me; but I little guessed that on that day had begun one of the most valuable, and the closest, and the dearest friendships, that I shall ever know.

"After I had left Oxford we came gradually to see one another very often: as the years went by our intimate relationship increased. We entered into one another's lives, if I may so say, absolutely. There was not a care, an expectation, a work, an interest of any kind of importance, which we did not share. We trusted one another so thoroughly that I am sure there was nothing about myself that I cared to hide from him, and I believe that there was little about him that he hid from me. And therefore, when I am speaking of him, now that

[1] [For other references to Crawley, see *Fors Clavigera*, Letters 62 and 67.]
[2] [No doubt, Mr. Selwyn Image: see above, Introduction, p. xxxii.]

Digitized by Google

he is gone, I feel that I am speaking from as sure a knowledge as ever one man can have of another. I do not wish, as he would not have wished me, to write a panegyric over him. He had great weaknesses, and great faults: he had powers so rare, and virtues so fine, that I am afraid it would sound merely exaggeration, if I said all the good that I knew of him. But some of the good I must say out. No man, I believe, ever breathed, whose spiritual and moral instincts were more delicate; whose devotion to his friends was more thorough and chivalrous; who more readily and on every occasion held his keen intelligence patiently and unreservedly at their service. He did foolish things, and, it may be, unworthy things: why should I hesitate to say what nobody was so ready to acknowledge as he was himself? But I will say this also without fear and without any reservation, that he was simply incapable of doing anything which had in it one grain of meanness. I have known him suffer the loss of a friendship, which was very dear to him, and endanger another, rather than break a promise of silence, which certainly under the circumstances most men of honour would have held him justified in breaking. His health for many years was bad, his circumstances were unavoidably hard, he was cursed or blessed, as you like to call it, with a self-torturing spirit of extreme subtlety, which probably no circumstances in the world could have saved him from the pains and dangers of. Yet, whenever a thing seemed to him a real duty, he carried it through and through. The pains he was ready to take over any work or any service were immense. No one ever went to him in trouble or for advice, but he gave them generously and cheerfully all that it was in his power to give them. Yet there was about him no suspicion of patronizing; and of the innumerable acts of kindness, small and great, which so many of us have received from him, no one would ever hear mention or hint from his own lips. I know that all this, that I am saying about my friend, is simply true. I loved him too dearly, and honoured him too highly, to care now about denying his faults, or about speaking of his splendid qualities with unbalanced emotion."

5. During the years when I was lecturing, or arranging the examples in my school, Mr. Burgess was engaged at fixed salary, executing either the woodcuts necessary to illustrate my lectures, or drawings to take permanent place in the school examples.[1] So far as I was able to continue *Proserpina*, the woodcuts were always executed by him:

[1] [See, in a later volume, the various catalogues of these.]

Digitized by Google

and indeed I was wholly dependent on his assistance for the effectual illustrations of my most useful books. Especially those in *Ariadne Florentina* and *Aratra Pentelici* are unequalled, whether in precision of facsimile, or the legitimate use of the various methods of wood-engraving according to his own judgment. He never put name or initial to his work, trusting to my occasional acknowledgment of the relations between us,—heaven knows—not given grudgingly, but carelessly and insufficiently, as in the stray note at p. 72 of *Ariadne*—or sometimes with mere commendation of the engraving—as at p. 78 of *Aratra*, without giving his name.[1]

At that time I had entire confidence in my own power, and hope in his progressive skill, and expected that we should both of us go on together, doing better and better, or else that he would take up some line of separate work which would give him position independently of any praise of mine.

6. Failing myself in all that I attempted to do at Oxford I went into far away work, historical and other, at Assisi and in Venice, which certainly not in pride, but in the habit fixed in me from childhood of thinking out whatever I cared for silently, partly also now in states of sadness which I did not choose to show or express, was all done without companions, poor Arthur suffering more than I knew (though I ought to have known) in being thus neglected. The year '78 brought us together again once more;—he was several times at Brantwood: the last happy walk we had together was to the top of the crags of the south-west side of the village of Coniston. He was again in London after that, and found there and possessed himself of some of Blake's larger drawings—known to me many and many a year before.[2] George Richmond had shown

[1] [Ruskin's references were to the octavo edition of each book; see § 83 *n.* of *Ariadne* and § 80 of *Aratra*. For other acknowledgments of Burgess's help and skill, see *Ariadne*, § 133, and *Aratra*, Preface, § 22 *n.*, and § 130.]

[2] [For Ruskin's appreciation of Blake, see Vol. V. p. 138, Vol. VIII. p. 256.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

V

Botanical Studies

p. 354

A. Burgess, Sc.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

them to me—with others—I suppose about 1840,—original studies for the illustrations to Young's *Night Thoughts*—and some connected with the more terrific subjects etched for the book of Job. I bought the whole series of them at once;—carried it home triumphantly—and made myself unhappy over it—and George Richmond again delivered me from thraldom of their possession.

They were the larger and more terrific of these which poor Arthur had now again fallen in with—especially the Nebuchadnezzar—and a wonderful witch with attendant owls and grandly hovering birds of night unknown to ornithology.

7. No one at the time was, so far as I know, aware of the symptoms of illness which had been haunting me for some days before, and I only verify their dates by diary entries,—imaginative, then beyond my wont, and proving that before the Blake drawings came, my thoughts were all wandering in their sorrowful direction,—with mingled coruscations of opposing fancy, too bright to last. As I have no intention of carrying *Præterita* beyond the year '75,—up to which time none of my powers, so far as I can judge, were anywise morbid,—I may say here, respecting the modes of overstrain which affected alike Arthur Burgess and myself in our later days, that our real work, and habits of consistent thought, were never the worse for them; that we always recognized dream for dream, and truth for truth; that Arthur's hand was as sure with the burin after his illness at Verona as in the perfect woodcuts of which examples are given with this paper; and that whatever visions came to me of other worlds higher or lower than this, I remained convinced that in all of them, two and two made four. Howbeit we never saw each other again, though Arthur was for some time employed for me at Rouen, in directing the photography for which I had obtained permission to erect scaffolding before the north gate of the west front of the cathedral:[1] and in spite of my own

[1] [This was in 1880.]

Digitized by Google

repeated illnesses, I still hoped with his help to carry out the design of *Our Fathers have Told us.* But very certainly any farther effort in that direction is now impossible to me: the more that I perceive the new generation risen round us cares nothing about what its Fathers either did or said. In writing so much as this implies of my own epitaph with my friend's, I am thankful to say, securely for both of us, that we did what we could thoroughly, and that all we did together will remain trustworthy and useful—uncontradicted, and unbettered—till it is forgotten.

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD,
27th February, 1887.

Digitized by Google

7

THE BLACK ARTS:

A REVERIE IN THE STRAND[1]

[1887]

1. It must be three or four years now since I was in London, Christmas in the North country passing scarcely noted, with a white frost and a little bell-ringing, and I

[1] [This paper appeared in the *Magazine of Art*, January 1888, vol. xi. pp. 73–77. It was reprinted in *John Ruskin: a Sketch of his Life and Work and his Opinions, with Personal Recollections*, by M. H. Spielmann (Cassell & Co., 1900), pp. 192–202. Mr. Spielmann there gave an account of the circumstances in which the paper was written, together with extracts from letters by Ruskin on the subject. "In the autumn of 1887 (says Mr. Spielmann) Ruskin was in London staying at Morley's Hotel, Trafalgar Square; his window overlooked the National Gallery, 'where the Turners are,' he said markedly. . . . The editorship of the *Magazine of Art* had just been confided to me, and my announcement of it seemed to awaken his sympathetic pleasure. He clapped his hands and cried, 'Bravo! I'm so glad. You have a great opportunity now for good,' and immediately proposed to contribute an article to its pages. It was agreed that the paper in question should appear in the January number, and that it should be followed by at least one other. Then he went off to Sandgate to recuperate, whence he wrote: 'I find the landlord and his wife so nice and the rooms so comfortable that I've settled down (so far as I know) till Christmas. But please don't tell anybody where I am.' And a few days later:—

> 'When do you want your bit of "pleasant" writing? Did I say it would be pleasant? I have no confidence in that prospect. What I meant was that it wouldn't be deliberately *un*pleasant; and I will further promise it shall not be technical. But I fear it will be done mostly in grisaille. I don't feel up to putting any sparkle in—nor colour neither.'"

On another occasion, in offering advice about the *Magazine*, he wrote:—

> 'For one thing I shall strongly urge the publication of continuous series of things, good or bad. Half the dulness of all art books is their being really like specimen advertisement books, instead of complete accounts of anything. I have finished the introductory paper; six leaves like this, written as close. It will, perhaps, be shorter than you wished in print, but you will see it chats about a good many things, and I couldn't tack on the principal one to the tail of them; so that you had better begin your January number with Watts' more serious paper.'

"Then (continues Mr. Spielmann) came the article, but with no title to it; and as the

Digitized by Google

don't know London any more, nor where I am in it—except the Strand. In which, walking up and down the other day, and meditating over its wonderful displays of etchings and engravings and photographs, all done to perfection such as I had never thought possible in my younger

press was waiting, a telegram was despatched to him to supply the omission." Ruskin replied :—

"I never compose by telegram, but call it 'The Black Arts,' if you like."

A subsequent letter of confirmation supplied as a substitute "A Reverie in the Strand"; and, while protesting against the telegram, which "'always makes me think somebody's dead,' he replied to a question of mine as to the amount owing to him for the article: 'you are indebted to me a penny a line; no more and no less. Of course, counted twopence through the double columns.'" The paper, here republished, was to have been followed by others, chiefly bearing on "body-colour Turners" as a contrast to the introductory matter, and on other matters as mentioned in the following letter :—

"19*th Jan.* '88.

"Dear Spielmann,—I have mislaid a line I wrote to acknowledge cheque, and tell you what I meant to write next—I never *quite* know, till I begin—but I want to go on about pure composition—as far as I can without being tiresome—and there will be something about skies and trees, and I'll undertake that the drawings shall be representable and not cost much in representing. Ever faithfully yours,

"J. Ruskin.

"M. H. Spielmann, Esq."

The further articles, however, were not written.

The paper was accompanied by three "process" reproductions of drawings by Ruskin—viz. (1) as head-piece, a sketch of Lucca, 1832; (2) in the text, on p. 75, "Mont Blanc de St. Gervais," said to be of the year "1832" but really much later (probably also 1882); and (3), occupying a full page (76), "The Cathedral Spire, Rouen," 1835: these drawings, having special connexion with the paper, are not here given with it; the third has already been reproduced (Vol. II., Plate 18, p. 400), "the spire" is really the Tour de Beurre, while the other two will be found in later volumes of the edition.

In the same number of the *Magazine of Art* (p. ix.) the following additional extracts were published from letters of Ruskin to the editor :—

"There ought to be a separate half-page of apology for the drawings of mine—in which the Rouen is a little too childish to show my proper early architectural power. All my really good drawings are too large, and most of them at Oxford."

"There is a very special interest, however (interposed the editor), attaching to the Rouen drawing, for it shows how strongly the influence of Prout was upon the draughtsman, then as now. 'Prout is one of the loves that always remain fresh to me,' he said to the writer a year or two ago." A copy of the preceding volume (1887) of the *Magazine of Art* had been sent by the editor to Ruskin. In acknowledging it, he wrote :—

"The really best thing in the book is Turner's 'Ulysses,' marvellously like the picture and a fine legitimate bit of woodwork. I may say further that very few of Turner's large oil subjects were engraved anything like so well, even in his own time."

This extract was printed in the *Academy* of November 12, 1887. The woodcut in question occupied p. 413, and was the work of O. Lacour.]

Digitized by Google

days, it became an extremely searching and troublesome question with me what was to come of all this literally "black art," and how it was to influence the people of our great cities. For the first force of it—clearly in that field every one is doing his sable best: there is no scamped photography nor careless etching; and for second force, there is a quantity of living character in our big towns, especially in their girls, who have an energetic and business-like "know all about it" kind of prettiness which is widely independent of colour, and which, with the parallel business characters, engineering and financial, of the city squiredom, can be vividly set forth by the photograph and the schools of painting developed out of it; then for third force, there is the tourist curiosity and the scientific naturalism, which go round the world fetching big scenery home for us that we never had dreamed of: cliffs that look like the world split in two, and cataracts that look as if they fell from the moon, besides all kinds of antiquarian and architectural facts, which twenty lives could never have learned in the olden time. What is it all to come to? Are our lives in this kingdom of darkness to be indeed twenty times as wise and long as they were in the light?

2. The answer—what answer was possible to me—came chiefly in the form of fatigue, and a sorrowful longing for an old Prout washed in with Vandyke brown and British ink, or even a Harding forest scene with all the foliage done in zigzag.

And, indeed, for one thing, all this labour and realistic finishing makes us lose sight of the charm of easily-suggestive lines—nay, of the power of lines, properly so called, altogether.

There is a little book, and a very precious and pretty one, of Dr. John Brown's, called *Something about a Well.*[1]

[1] [*Something about a Well, with more of our Dogs.* By the late John Brown, M.D., author of *Rab and his Friends.* Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1882—a booklet of twenty-four pages in paper wrappers. For Ruskin's references to Dr. John Brown (1810–1882), see Vol. XII. p. xx., and compare Vol. X. p. lix.; *Fors Clavigera,* Letter 32; *Hortus Inclusus,* p. 9 (ed. 1902); and *Præterita,* ii. ch. xii. § 227. See also Vol. XIII. p. 400.]

Digitized by Google

It has a yellow paper cover, and on the cover a careful woodcut from one of the Doctor's own pen-sketches: two wire-haired terriers begging, and carrying an old hat between them.

There is certainly not more than five minutes' work, if that, in the original sketch; but the quantity of dog-life in those two beasts—the hill-weather that they have roughed through together, the wild fidelity of their wistful hearts, the pitiful, irresistible mendicancy of their eyes and paws—fills me with new wonder and love every time the little book falls out of any of the cherished heaps in my study.

No one has pleaded more for finish than I in past time, or oftener,[1] or perhaps so strongly, asserted the first principle of Leonardo, that a good picture should look like a mirror of the thing itself.[2] But now that everybody can mirror the thing itself—at least the black and white of it—as easily as he takes his hat off, and then engrave the photograph, and steel the copper, and print piles and piles of the thing by steam, all as good as the first half-dozen proofs used to be, I begin to wish for a little less to look at, and would, for my own part, gladly exchange my tricks of stippling and tinting for the good Doctor's gift of drawing two wire-haired terriers with a wink.

3. And truly, putting all likings for old fashions out of the way, it remains certain that in a given time and with simple means, a man of imaginative power can do more and express more, and excite the fancy of the spectator more, by frank outline than by completed work; and that assuredly there ought to be in all our national art schools an outline class trained to express themselves vigorously and accurately in that manner. Were there no other reason for such lessoning, it is a sufficient one that there are modes of genius which become richly productive in that restricted

[1] [See, more especially, *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. ch. ix. ("Of Finish"), and vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vii. § 21 *n.*, where that chapter is brought into relation with several passages on the subject in *Stones of Venice*.]

[2] [The passage from Leonardo's *Trattato della Pittura* is quoted, translated, and discussed in *Lectures on Art*, § 129.]

Digitized by Google

manner; and yet by no training could be raised into the excellence of painting. Neither Bewick nor Cruikshank in England, nor Retsch, nor Ludwig Richter, in Germany,[1] could ever have become painters; their countrymen owe more to their unassuming instinct of invention than to the most exalted efforts of their historical schools.

4. But it must be noted, in passing, that the practice of outline in England, and I suppose partly in Continental academies also, has been both disgraced and arrested by the endeavour to elevate it into the rendering of ideal and heroic form, especially to the delineation of groups of statuary. Neither flesh nor sculptured marble can be outlined; and the endeavour to illustrate classical art and historical essays on it, by outlines of sculpture and architecture, has done the double harm of making outline common and dull, and preventing the public from learning that the merit of sculpture is in its surfaces, not its outlines.[2] The essential value of outline is in its power of suggesting quantity, intricacy, and character, in accessory detail, and in the richly-ornamented treatment which can be carried over large spaces which in a finished painting must be lost in shade.

5. But I have said in many places before now, though never with enough insistence, that schools of outline ought to be associated with the elementary practice of those entering on the study of colour.[3] Long before the patience or observation of children are capable of drawing in light and shade, they can appreciate the gaiety, and are refreshed by the interest of colour; and a very young child can be taught to wash it flatly, and confine it duly within limits. A little lady of nine years old coloured my whole volume of Guillim's heraldry[4] for me without one transgression or

[1] [For Ruskin on Bewick, see note in Vol. XIII. p. 435; on Cruikshank, Vol. VI. p. 471; on Retsch, Vol. IV. pp. 259 *n.*, 371; on Richter, Vol. XV. (*Elements of Drawing*, §§ 91, 239, 257).]

[2] [See also below, p. 436; and compare *Aratra Pentelici*, §§ 20, 22; *Val d'Arno*, § 286.]

[3] [See, for instance, "Lectures on Colour" (Vol. XII. pp. 482 *seq.*); and *Lectures on Landscape*, Lecture i. ("Outline"); and compare *Laws of Fésole*, ch. viii. ("Of the Relation of Colour to Outline").]

[4] [John Guillim (Rouge-Croix Pursuivant at Arms): *A Display of Heraldrie*, first published in 1610 and often re-issued.]

Digitized by Google

blot; and there is no question but that the habit of even and accurately limited tinting is the proper foundation of noble water-colour art.

6. In the original plan of *Modern Painters*, under the head of "Ideas of Relation," I had planned an exact inquiry into the effects of colour-masses in juxtaposition; but found when I entered on it that there were no existing data in the note-books of painters from which any first principles could be deduced, and that the analysis of their unexplained work was far beyond my own power, the rather that the persons among my friends who had most definitely the gift of colour-arrangement were always least able to give any account of their own skill.

But, in its connection with the harmonies of music, the subject of the relations of pure colour is one of deep scientific and—I am sorry to use the alarming word, but there is no other—metaphysical interest; and without debate, the proper way of approaching it would be to give any young person, of evident colour-faculty, a series of interesting outline subjects to colour with a limited number of determined tints, and to watch with them the pleasantness, or dulness—a discord of the arrangements which, according to the nature of the subjects, might be induced in the colours.

7. It is to be further observed that although the skill now directed to the art of chromo-lithotint has achieved wonders in that mechanism, the perfection of illustrated work must always be in woodcut or engraving coloured by hand.[1] No stamped tint of water-colour can ever perfectly give the gradation to the sharp edge left by a well-laid touch of the pencil. And there can be no question (it has so long been my habit to assert things—at all events very questionable in the terms I choose for them—in mere love of provocation, that now in my subdued state of age and infirmity I take refuge, as often as possible, in the Unquestionable) that great advantage might be gained in the geography classes of primary schools by a system of

[1] [See on this subject, Vol. XIII. pp. 529–531.]

Digitized by Google

bright colour adapted to *dissected* maps.[1] In the aforesaid condition of age and infirmity which I sometimes find it very difficult to amuse, I have been greatly helped by getting hold of a dissected map or two—four, to be accurate—Europe, France, England, and Scotland, and find it extremely instructive (though I am by way of knowing as much geography as most people) to put them together out of chance-thrown heaps when I am good for nothing else. I begin, for instance, in consequence of this exercise, to have some notion where Wiltshire is, and Montgomeryshire; and where the departments of Haute Loire and Haute Garonne are in France, and whereabouts St. Petersburg is in Russia. But the chief profit and pleasure of the business to me is in colouring the bits of counties for myself, to my own fancy, with nice creamy body-colour, which covers up all the names, leaves nothing but the shape to guess the county by (or colour when once determined), and opens the most entertaining debates of which will be the prettiest grouping of colours on the condition of each being perfectly isolated.

8. By this means, also, some unchangeable facts about each district may at once be taught, far more valuable than the reticulation of roads and rails with which all maps are now, as a matter of course, encumbered, and with which a child at its dissected map period has nothing to do. Thus, generally reserving purple for the primitive rock districts, scarlet for the volcanic, green for meadow-land, and yellow for corn-fields, one can still get in the warm or cold hues of each colour variety enough to separate districts politically—if not geologically distinct; one can keep a dismal grey for the coal countries, a darker green for woodland—the forests of Sherwood and Arden, for instance—and then giving rich gold to the ecclesiastical and royal domains, and painting the lakes and rivers with ultramarine, the map becomes a gay and pleasant bit of

[1] [For the educational importance attached by Ruskin to map-drawing, see *Laws of Fésole*, ch. ix.]

Digitized by Google

kaleidoscopic iridescence without any question of colour-harmonies. But for the sake of these, by a good composer in variegation, the geological facts might be ignored, and fixing first on *long-confirmed* political ones, as, for instance, on the blanche-rose colour and damask-rose for York and Lancaster, and the gold for Wells, Durham, Winchester, and Canterbury, the other colours might be placed as their musical relations required, and lessons of their harmonic nature and power, such as could in no other so simple method be enforced, made at once convincing and delightful.

9. I need not say, of course, that in manuscript illumination and in painted glass lessons of that kind are constant and of the deepest interest; but in manuscript the intricacy of design, and in glass the inherent quality of the material, are so great a part of the matter that the abstract relations of colour cannot be observed in their simplicity. I intended in the conclusion of this letter to proceed into some inquiry as to the powers of chromo-litho-tint; but the subject is completely distinct from that of colouring by hand, and I have been so much shaken in my former doubts of the capability of the process by the wonderful facsimiles of Turner vignettes, lately executed by Mr. Long,[1] from the collection in the subterranean domain of the National Gallery, that I must ask permission for farther study of these results before venturing on any debate of their probable range in the future.

J. RUSKIN.

SANDGATE, ST. MARTIN'S DAY, 1887.[2]

[1] [A series of chromo-lithographs much sold at the time as drawing copies.]
[2] [November 11. Ruskin was at Folkestone and Sandgate from September 1887 to February 1888.]

Digitized by Google

PART III

NOTES

ON

PROUT AND HUNT

(1879–1880)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

NOTES BY MR. RUSKIN

ON

SAMUEL PROUT

AND

WILLIAM HUNT

ILLUSTRATED BY

A LOAN COLLECTION OF DRAWINGS

EXHIBITED AT THE

FINE ART SOCIETY'S GALLERIES

148 NEW BOND STREET

1879–1880

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

[*Bibliographical Note.*—Of this Catalogue there are five editions:—

First Edition (1879–1880).—The title-page is as shown here on the preceding page. Octavo, pp. 108. The "Note" (here p. 371) on p. 3; Preface (here pp. 373–404), pp. 5–44; the Notes on Prout (here pp. 405–439), pp. 45–82; Notes on Hunt (here pp. 440–448), pp. 83–90; Appendices i.–iv., pp. 91–97. (These appendices, being extracts from Ruskin's books, are not here reprinted: see below, p. 448 *n.*). Catalogue of Drawings (here pp. 449–454), pp. 99–106; List of Contributors to the exhibition (here p. 454), pp. 107–108. The imprint at the foot of the last page reads—"London: Printed by Strangeways & Sons, Tower Street, Upper St. Martin's Lane." The headlines vary according to each division of the pamphlet. Issued in mottled grey paper wrappers, with the title-page (set slightly differently) repeated on the front cover, and with the following words added at the foot: "First Edition. Price 1s. 6d. | *N.B.*—Twenty-five per cent. of the Entrances to the Exhibition will be | divided among Art Charities." The variation in the setting of the title-page is as follows: "Notes by Mr. Ruskin | on | Samuel Prout and William Hunt." On p. 4 of the wrappers was an advertisement of the Illustrated Edition.

Some copies purporting to be of the First Edition are not in fact such. They are copies of the Second Edition, bound up in wrappers with the front cover set like the Second Edition, but bearing the words "First Edition."

Second Edition (1879–1880).—In this the setting of the title-page on the cover agrees with that on p. 1 of the book; the words "Second Thousand" being substituted for "First Edition." On pp. 99–106 the headline "Catalogue of Drawings" is changed to "Complete Index of Drawings"; and on pp. 45–90 "Catalogue," to "Notes on the Drawings." On p. 45 in ed. 1 the Catalogue began with the words:—

"The reader will find, ending this pamphlet, a continuous index to the whole collection of drawings, with references to the pages in which special notice has been taken of them."

The references, however, were omitted in ed. 1. They were supplied in the second and later editions, but the words of the above sentence after "drawings" were cancelled; the references have been restored in this edition. The No. of a drawing left blank in a footnote on p. 7 (here p. 374) was filled up in ed. 2 as No. 132. The note on p. 48 (here p. 408) in ed. 1—"It was exhibited last year, but if it comes from Scotland, will be shown again," etc. —was altered as here, the drawing having in the meanwhile arrived. On p. 67 (here p. 425) the words "And in the great drawing . . . old times only" were transferred from the footnote to the text; this caused some difference in the setting of the five following pages. On p. 71 (here p. 429) the amount of money was filled in; in ed. 1 it appeared as "£ s. d." In the index fifty-one of the drawings, against which (in ed. 1) Ruskin's name appeared as the contributor, were now said to be contributed by Mr. S. G. Prout (49) and Mr. E. Quaile (2). Nos. 179–182 were added to the Catalogue of Drawings on p. 106 (here p. 454).

Third Edition (1879–1880).—For the most part a reprint of ed. 2. "Third Thousand" was substituted on the cover, and Nos. 183 and 184 were added to the list of drawings on p. 106 (here p. 454).

Fourth Edition (1879–1880).—Again a reprint, "Fourth Thousand" being substituted on the cover. In a portion of the edition, on p. 3 of the wrapper, was an advertisement of a proposed etching by Mr. Herkomer, A.R.A., of his portrait of Ruskin, which was then on exhibition at the Fine Art Society's Galleries.

Digitized by Google

Fifth (*Illustrated*) *Edition* (1880).—The title-page is :—

Notes by Mr. Ruskin | on | Samuel Prout | and | William Hunt, | in illustration of | a Loan Collection of Drawings | exhibited at | The Fine Art Society's Galleries, | In 1879–1880. | Illustrated with Twenty Autotypes. | London : | The Fine Art Society, Limited, | 148 New Bond Street, | 1880.

Demy-quarto, pp. 95. On the reverse of the title-page is the imprint—"London : Printed by Strangeways & Sons, Tower Street, Upper St. Martin's Lane, W.C." On p. 3 is the following "Note" on the illustrated edition :—

"The success which attended the Illustrated Edition of Mr. Ruskin's Notes on his Turner Drawings has induced the Fine Art Society again to ask his consent to the issue of a similar edition of those compiled by him on Samuel Prout and William Hunt.

"This consent he has given, and the more readily, because the means of reproduction adopted in the present instance are more satisfactory than those used in the former volume. More satisfactory for these reasons—first, that the reproductions are taken directly from the originals, instead of from engravings after the originals; second, that the majority of the drawings now reproduced lend themselves more readily to the process. On this account, too, the drawings of Prout have been reproduced in fifteen instances, whilst of the Hunts only five have been selected.

"Subscribers to the Illustrated Edition of the Turner Notes will, it is trusted, forgive the want of uniformity in size between the two volumes, it being found that the larger sheet now used shows to much greater advantage the delicate pencillings of Mr. Prout."

List of Reproductions, p. 5, as follows :—

		PAGE
1.	Portrait of Samuel Prout. *By William Hunt*	*to face* 38
2.	Calais	,, 40
3.	Abbeville—Church of St. Wulfran	,, 30
4.	Amiens	,, 28
5.	Evreux	,, 42
6.	Strasburg	,, 44
7.	Old Street in Lisieux	,, 46
8.	Ghent	,, 48
9.	Antwerp	,, 50
10.	Prague—Entrance over the Bridge	,, 62
11.	The Drachenfels	*to face* 52
12.	Como	,, 32
13.	Venice	,, 54
14.	The Coliseum	,, 34
15.	Domo d'Ossola	,, 60
16.	Bologna—San Giacomo	,, 34
17.	The Dead Dove	,, 69
18.	The Invalid	,, 72
19.	The Shy Sitter	*Frontispiece*
20.	Hawthorn and Bird's Nest	*to face* 79

Contents, p. 7; Preface, pp. 9–38; Text of Notes, pp. 39–91; Advertisements, pp. 93–95. Issued in half Roxburgh, cloth sides, top edge gilt, printed on hand-made paper. The volume is lettered on the front cover—"Notes by Mr. Ruskin | on | Samuel Prout | and William Hunt," and up the back—"Notes by Mr. Ruskin on S. Prout & W. Hunt"; and across at the foot of the back—"The | Fine Art | Society." Five hundred copies were printed; price Two Guineas.

The text was that of the preceding edition, with a few notes (with regard to the ownership of drawings, etc.) added by the Fine Art Society.

Reprinted (1902) in *Ruskin on Pictures*, vol. ii. pp. 271–350.

Reviews appeared in the *Architect*, July 10, 1880; the *Times*, August 30; and the *Saturday Review*, September 25.

Variæ Lectiones.—These have been already enumerated. In this edition a few misprints (in all previous editions) have been corrected: "bitter" for "hither" (p. 398); "77" for "67" (p. 429); "Pillar" for "Pillars" (pp. 435, 452); "Garisendà" for "Grisenda" (p. 451). See also p. 436 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

NOTE

I HAVE to thank the kind friends who have contributed drawings. I regret that very many of them have had to be returned, simply because I had already to my hand examples which sufficiently illustrated the lessons I wished to teach in putting together these Notes.

J. RUSKIN.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Samuel Prout

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

1. It has been only in compliance with the often and earnestly-urged request of my friend Mr. Marcus Huish, that I have thrown the following notes together, on the works of two artists belonging to a time with which nearly all associations are now ended in the mind of general society; and of which my own memories, it seemed to me, could give little pleasure (even if I succeeded in rendering them intelligible) to a public indulged with far more curious arts, and eager for otherwise poignant interests, than those which seemed admirable, though not pretending to greatness, and were felt to be delightful, though not provoking enthusiasm, in the quiet and little diverted lives of the English middle classes "sixty years since."[1]

2. It is especially to be remembered that drawings of this simple character were made for these same middle classes, exclusively; and even for the second order of the middle classes, more accurately expressed by the term *bourgeoisie.* The great people always bought Canaletto, not Prout, and Van Huysum,[2] not Hunt. There was indeed no quality in the bright little water-colours which could look other than pert in ghostly corridors, and petty in halls of state; but they gave an unquestionable tone of liberal-mindedness to a suburban villa, and were the cheerfullest possible decorations for a moderate-sized breakfast-parlour opening on a nicely-mown lawn.[3] Their liveliness even rose, on occasion, to the charity of beautifying the narrow chambers of those whom business or fixed habit still retained in the obscurity of London itself; and I remember with peculiar respect the

[1] [See above, p. 306.]
[2] [See Vol. III. p. 672; Vol. XII. pp. 300, 455.]
[3] [See p. xxxv., above.]

Digitized by Google

pride of a benevolent physician,[1] who never would exchange his neighbourhood to the poor of St. Giles's for the lucrative lustre of a West End square, in wreathing his tiny little front drawing-room with Hunt's loveliest apple-blossom, and taking the patients for whom he had prescribed fresh air the next instant on a little visit to the country.

3. Nor was this adaptation to the tastes and circumstances of the London citizen a constrained or obsequious compliance on the part of the kindly artists. They were themselves, in mind, as in habits of life, completely a part of the characteristic metropolitan population whom an occasional visit to the Continent always thrilled with surprise on finding themselves again among persons who familiarly spoke French; and whose summer holidays, though more customary, amused them nevertheless with the adventure, and beguiled them with the pastoral charm, of an uninterrupted picnic. Mr. Prout lived at Brixton,[2] just at the rural extremity of Cold Harbour Lane, where the spire of Brixton Church, the principal architectural ornament of the neighbourhood, could not but greatly exalt, by comparison, the impressions received from that of Strasburg Cathedral, or the Hôtel de Ville of Bruxelles; and Mr. Hunt, though often in the spring and summer luxuriating in country lodgings, was only properly at home in the Hampstead Road,* and never painted a cluster of nuts without some expression, visible enough by the manner of their presentation, of the pleasure it was to him to see them in the shell, instead of in a bag at the greengrocer's.

* See his own inscription, with LONDON in capitals, under No. 132.[3]

---

[1] [Probably Mr. R. Wade, who resided in Dean Street, Soho, and formed a collection of Hunt's works; dispersed in 1872.]

[2] [First at "Brixton Place"; after 1835, at "No. 2 Bedford Place, Clapham Rise"; after 1840, at "39 Torrington Square"; after 1845, at "No. 5 De Crespigny Terrace, Denmark Hill." In the latter years of his life he lived much at Hastings. In a letter written there he refers wistfully to "dearest and sweetest London": see Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, ii. 55.]

[3] [The inscription is: "Love what you study, study what you love." William Hunt's London addresses were successively 36 Brownlow Street, Drury Lane; 6 Marchmont Street, Brunswick Square; 55 Burton Street, Burton Crescent; and 62 Stanhope Street, Hampstead Road.]

Digitized by Google

4. The lightly rippled level of this civic life lay, as will be easily imagined, far beneath the distractions, while it maintained itself meekly, yet severely, independent of the advantages, held out by the social system of what is most reverently called "Town." Neither the disposition, the health, nor the means of either artist admitted of their spending their evenings, in general, elsewhere than by their own firesides; nor could a spring levée of English peeresses and foreign ambassadors[1] be invited by the modest painter whose only studio was his little back-parlour, commanding a partial view of the scullery steps and the water-butt. The fluctuations of moral and æsthetic sentiment in the public mind were of small moment to the humble colourist, who depended only on the consistency of its views on the subject of early strawberries; and the thrilling subjects presented by the events or politics of the day were equally indifferent to the designer who invited interest to nothing later than the architecture of the fifteenth century. Even the treasures of scientific instruction, and marvels of physical discovery, were without material influence on the tranquillity of the two native painters' uneducated skill. Prout drew every lovely street in Europe, without troubling himself to learn a single rule of perspective; while Hunt painted mossy banks for five-and-twenty years, without ever caring to know a sphagnum from a polypody, and embossed or embowered his birds' eggs to a perfection, which Greek connoisseurs would have assured us the mother had unsuspectingly sat on,[2] without enlarging his range of ornithological experience beyond the rarities of tomtit and hedge-sparrow.

5. This uncomplaining resignation of patronage, and unblushing blindness to instruction, were allied, in both painters, with a steady consistency in technical practice, which, from the first, and to the last, precluded both from all hope of

[1] [The MS. reads, "dazzling Duchesses and tremendous Excellencies."]

[2] [The MS. reads simply, ". . . a perfection which I doubt not the mothers would have sat on." For Ruskin's subsequent addition, referring to the stories which were current among the Greek connoisseurs of birds unsuspectingly pecking at grapes painted by Zeuxis, etc., see Vol. I. p. 268 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

promotion to the honours, as it withheld them from the peril of entanglement in the rivalries, connected with the system of exhibition in the Royal Academy. Mr. Prout's method of work was entirely founded on the quite elementary qualities of white paper and black Cumberland lead; and expressly terminated within the narrow range of prismatic effects producible by a brown or blue outline, with a wash of ochre or cobalt. Mr. Hunt's early drawings depended for their peculiar charm on the most open and simple management of transparent colour; and his later ones, for their highest attainments, on the flexibility of a pigment which yielded to the slightest touch and softest motion of a hand always more sensitive than firm. The skill which unceasing practice, within limits thus modestly unrelaxed, and with facilities of instrument thus openly confessed, enabled each draughtsman in his special path to attain, was exerted with a vividness of instinct somewhat resembling that of animals, only in the slightest degree conscious of praiseworthiness, but animated by a healthy complacency, as little anxious for external sympathy as the self-content of a bee in the translucent symmetry of its cell, or of a chaffinch in the silver tracery of her nest—and uniting, through the course of their uneventful and active lives, the frankness of the bird with the industry of the insect.

6. In all these points of view, the drawings to which I venture, not without hesitation, to call the passing attention of the public, can claim regard only as examples of genius both narrowed and depressed; yet healthy enough to become more elastic under depression, and scintillant enough to be made more vivid by contraction. But there are other respects in which these seemingly unimportant works challenge graver study; and illustrate phases of our own national mind—I might perhaps say, even of national civilization—which coincide with many curious changes in social feelings, and may lead to results not easily calculable in social happiness.

Digitized by Google

office, which flowers can attain a fulfil — is one of
in being wreathed into grace of
~~service to a wreathing a~~ garlands or ~~gathered~~ united into
~~[illegible]~~ the glory of bouquets, for decoration of beauty,
or flattery of noblesse; — if fruit ~~or other~~ or still life pieces, they agree
no less distinctly in their manner of reference to the supreme
~~crowning all the destinies of~~
~~dessert and~~ hour when the destinies of all fruit
is accomplished
~~are~~ to be ~~crowned~~ at a royal dessert — and the furred
satisfy fulfil the ~~[illegible]~~ wisdom of Providence by promotion to the
and feathered life of hill and forest in, ~~on a~~ kitchen dresser.

A PAGE OF THE MS. OF "NOTES ON PROUT AND HUNT"

pp. 376, 377

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

7. If the reader has any familiarity with the galleries of painting in the great cities of Europe,[1] he cannot but retain a clear, though somewhat monotonously calm, impression of the character of those polished flower pieces, or still-life pieces, which occupy subordinate corners in their smaller rooms; and invite to moments of repose, or frivolity, the attention and imagination which have been wearied in admiring the attitudes of heroism, and sympathizing with the sentiments of piety. Recalling to his memory the brightest examples of these which his experience can supply, he will find that all the older ones agree—if flower pieces—in a certain courtliness and formality of arrangement, implying that the highest honours which flowers can attain are in being wreathed into grace of garlands, or assembled in variegation of bouquets, for the decoration of beauty or flattery of noblesse. If fruit or still-life pieces, they agree no less distinctly in directness of reference to the supreme hour when the destiny of dignified fruit is to be accomplished in a royal dessert; and the furred and feathered life of hill and forest may bear witness to the Wisdom of Providence by its extinction for the kitchen dresser.

8. Irrespectively of these ornamental virtues, and culinary utilities, the painter never seems to perceive any conditions of beauty in the things themselves, which would make them worth regard for their own sake; nor, even in these appointed functions, are they ever supposed to be worth painting, unless the pleasures they procure be distinguished as those of the most exalted society. No artists of the old school would ever think of constructing a subject out of the herbs of a cottage garden, or viands of a rural feast. Whatever interest was then taken in the life of the lower orders involved always some reference to their rudenesses or vices; and rarely exhibits itself in any other expression than that of contempt for their employments, and reproach to their recreation.

[1] [The MS. adds, "or the scarcely less rich galleries of English, and a few remaining Italian, palaces."]

Digitized by Google

9. In all such particulars the feelings shown in the works of Hunt, and of the school with which he was associated, directly reverse those of the preceding age. So far from being garlanded into any polite symmetry, his primroses fresh from the bank, and hawthorns white from the hedge, confess at once their artless origin in the village lane—have evidently been gathered only at the choice, and thrown down at the caprice, of the farmer's children; and cheerfully disclaim all hope of ever contributing to the splendours or felicities of the great. The bloom with which he bedews the grape, the frosted gold with which he frets the pine, are spent chiefly to show what a visible grace there is in the fruits of the earth, which we may sometimes feel that it is rude to touch and swinish to taste; and the tendernesses of hand and thought that soothe the rose-grey breast of the fallen dove, and weave the couch of moss for its quiet wings, propose no congratulation to the spectator on the future flavour of the bird in a pie.

10. It is a matter of extreme difficulty, but of no less interest, to distinguish, in this order of painting, what part of it has its origin in a plebeian—not to say vulgar—simplicity, which education would have invested with a severer charm; and what part is grounded on a real sense of natural beauty, more pure and tender than could be discerned amid the luxury of courts, or stooped to by the pride of nobles.

11. For an especial instance, the drawing of the interior, No. 174,[1] may be taken as a final example of the confidence which the painter felt in his power of giving some kind of interest to the most homely objects, and rendering the transitions of ordinary light and shade impressive, though he had nothing more sacred to illuminate than a lettuce, and nothing more terrible to hide than a reaping-hook. The dim light from the flint-glass window, and the general disposition and scale of the objects it falls on, remind me sometimes, however unreasonably, of the little oratory into

[1] [For another reference to it, see p. 383.]

Digitized by Google

which the deeply-worn steps ascend from the Beauchamp Chapel at Warwick. But I know perfectly well, and partly acknowledge the rightness of his judgment, though I cannot analyze it, that Hunt would no more have painted that knightly interior instead of this, with helmets lying about instead of saucepans, and glowing heraldries staying the light instead of that sea-green lattice, than he would have gone for a walk round his farm in a court dress.

12. "Plebeian—not to say vulgar"—choice; but I fear that even "vulgar," with full emphasis, must be said sometimes in the end. Not that a pipkin of cream in Devonshire is to be thought of less reverently than a vase of oil or canister of bread in Attica; but that the English dairymaid in her way can hold her own with the Attic canephora, and the peasant children of all countries where leaves are green and waters clear, possess a grace of their own no less divine than that of branch and wave. And it is to be sorrowfully confessed that the good old peach and apple painter was curiously insensible to this brighter human beauty; and though he could scarcely pass a cottage door around his Berkshire[1] home without seeing groups of which Correggio would have made Cupids, and Luini cherubs, turned away from them all, to watch the rough ploughboy at his dinner, or enliven a study of his parlour-maid at her glass (158) with the elegance of a red and green pincushion.[2]

13. And yet, for all this, the subtle sense of beauty above referred to was always in his mind, and may be proved and partly illustrated, by notice of two very minute, but very constant, differences between his groups of still life and those of the Dutch painters. In every flower piece of pretension, by the masters of that old school, two accessory points of decoration are never absent. The first of these is the dew-drop, or rain-drop—it may be two or three drops, of either size,

[1] [? Hampshire. The country address given by Hunt in the catalogues was "Park-gate, Bramley, near Basingstoke, Hants." His other favourite resort was Hastings.]

[2] [For another reference to this drawing ("Sunday Morning"), see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 117).]

Digitized by Google

on one of the smoothest petals of the central flower. This is always, and quite openly, done to show how well the painter can do it—not in the least with any enjoyment of wetness in the flower. The Dutchman never got a wet flower to paint from. He had his exquisite and exemplary poppy or tulip brought in from the market as he had occasion, and put on its dew-drops for it as a lady's dressing-maid puts on her diamonds, merely for state. But Hunt saw the flowers in his little garden really bright in the baptismal dawn, or drenched with the rain of noontide, and knew that no mortal could paint any real likeness of that heaven-shed light;—and never once attempted it: you will find nothing in any of his pictures merely put on that you may try to wipe it off.

14. But there was a further *tour de force* demanded of the Dutch workman, without which all his happiest preceding achievements would have been unacknowledged. Not only a dew-drop, but, in some depth of bell, or cranny of leaf, a bee, or a fly, was needful for the complete satisfaction of the connoisseur. In the articulation of the fly's legs, or the neurography of the bee's wings, the Genius of painting was supposed to signify her accepted disciples; and their work went forth to the European world, thenceforward, without question, as worthy of its age and country. But, without recognizing in myself, or desiring to encourage in my scholars, any unreasonable dislike or dread of the lower orders of living creatures, I trust that the reader will feel with me that none of Mr. Hunt's peaches or plums would be made daintier by the detection on them of even the most cunningly latent wasp, or cautiously rampant caterpillar; and will accept, without so much opposition as it met with forty years ago, my then first promulgated, but steadily since repeated assertion, that the "modern painter" had in these matters less vanity than the ancient one, and better taste.[1]

[1] [Better than some of the ancients (*i.e.*, the Dutch), but no better than others (*i.e.*, Titian); see the passage, in the preface to the second edition of *Modern Painters*, vol. i., contrasting Titian's method of painting flowers with that of the Dutch: "no dew-drops, nor flies, nor trickeries of any kind" (Vol. III. p. 33).]

Digitized by Google

15. Another interesting evidence of Hunt's feeling for beauty is to be found in the unequal distribution of his pains to different parts of his subject. This is, indeed, one of the peculiar characteristics of our modern manner, and in the abstract not a laudable one. All the old masters, without exception, complete their pictures from corner to corner with a strictly driven level of deliberation; and whether it be a fold of drapery, a blade of grass, or a wreath of cloud, on which they are subordinately occupied, the pencil moves at the same tranquil pace, and the qualities of the object are rendered with the same fixed attention. In this habitual virtue, the dull and the brilliant, the weak and the mighty, concur without exception; holding it for their first point of honour to be thorough craftsmen, and to carry on the solicitude of their skill throughout the piece, as an armourer would hammer a corslet, or a housewife knit a stocking, leaving no edge untempered, and no thread unfastened. Modern petulance and incompetence lead, on the contrary, to the flaunting of dexterity in one place, and the pretence of ease in another—complete some portions of the subject with hypocritical affection, and abandon others in ostentatious contempt. In some few cases, the manner arises from a true eagerness of imagination, or kindly and natural desire for sympathy in particular likings; but in the plurality of instances, the habit allies itself with mistaken principles of art, and protects impatience and want of skill under the shield of philosophy.

16. Few modern pieces of oil-painting are more accomplished or deliberate than those of Meissonier; and in the example placed on the table in the centre of the room,[1] his subject was one which he certainly would not have treated, consciously, with prosaic indignity of manner, or injurious economy of toil. Yet the inequality of workmanship has depressed what might have been a most sublime picture almost to the level of a scenic effect. The dress of the

[1] ["Napoleon in 1814." See below, p. 438.]

Digitized by Google

handiwork into the deceptive image of a natural surface—are, without any exception, signs of declining intelligence, and benumbed or misguided feelings.

20. I therefore esteem Hunt's work all the more exemplary in acknowledging without disguise the restrictions imposed on the use of water-colour as a medium for vigorously realistic effects; and I have placed pieces of it in my Oxford school[1] as standards of imitative (as distinguished from decorative) colour, in the rightness and usefulness of which I have every day more confirmed trust. I am aware of no other pieces of art, in modern days, at once so sincere and so accomplished: only let it be noted that I use the term "sincere" in this case, not as imputing culpable fallacy to pictures of more imaginative power, but only as implying the unbiassed directness of aim at the realization of very simple facts, which is often impossible to the passions, or inconsistent with the plans, of greater designers.

21. In more cautiously guarded terms of praise, and with far less general proposal of their peculiar qualities for imitation, I have yet, both in my earlier books, and in recent lectures at Oxford,[2] spoken of the pencil sketches of Prout with a reverence and enthusiasm which it is my chief personal object in the present exhibition to justify, or at least to explain; so that future readers may not be offended, as I have known some former ones to be, by expressions which seemed to them incompatible with the general tenor of my teaching.

22. It is quite true that my feelings towards this painter are much founded on, or at least coloured by, early associations; but I have never found the memories of my childhood beguile me into any undue admiration of the architecture in Billiter Street or Brunswick Square;[3] and I

[1] [See, *e.g.*, No. 213 in the "Educational Series," described on p. 49 of Ruskin's "Catalogue of the Educational Series," ed. 1874.]

[2] [See references given above, p. xxxv.]

[3] [Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, his birthplace; Billiter Street, his father's office.]

Digitized by Google

believe the characters which first delighted me in the drawings of this—in his path unrivalled—artist, deserve the best attention and illustration of which in my advanced years I am capable.

The little drawing, No. 95, bought, I believe, by my grandfather, hung in the corner of our little dining parlour at Herne Hill as early as I can remember, and had a most fateful and continual power over my childish mind.[1] Men are made what they finally become only by the external accidents which are in harmony with their inner nature.[2] I was not made a student of Gothic merely because this little drawing of Prout's was the first I knew; but the hereditary love of antiquity, and thirst for country life, which were as natural to me as a little jackdaw's taste for steeples or dabchick's for reeds, were directed and tempered in a very definite way by the qualities of this single and simple drawing.

23. In the first place, it taught me generally to like ruggedness; and the conditions of joint in moulding, and fitting of stones in walls which were most weather-worn, and like the grey dykes of a Cumberland hillside. This predilection—passion, I might more truly call it—holds me yet so strongly that I can never quite justly conceive the satisfaction of the original builders, even of the most delicate edifice, in seeing its comely stones well set together. Giotto's tower, and the subtly Cyclopean walls of early Verona, have indeed chastised the prejudice out of me, so far as regards work in marble enriched with mosaic and pure sculpture; but I had almost rather see Furness or Fountains Abbey strewed in grass-grown heaps by their brook-sides, than in the first glow and close setting of their fresh-hewn sandstone. Whatever is rationally justifiable in this feeling, so far as it is dependent on just reverence for

[1] ["An English Cottage." It will be remembered that Ruskin's first work, *The Poetry of Architecture*, written when he was nineteen, was partly devoted to a comparison of the cottage architecture of England with that of the Continent.]

[2] [Compare *Præterita*, i. ch. ii. § 28.]

Digitized by Google

the signs of antiquity, and may therefore be trusted to, as existing generally in the minds of persons of thoughtful temperament, was enough explained, long ago, in the passages of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, which, the book not being now generally accessible,[1] I reprint in Appendix I.; but openness of joints and roughness of masonry are not exclusively signs of age or decay in buildings: and I did not at that time enough insist on the propriety, and even the grace, of such forms of literal "rustication"* as are compelled by coarseness of materials, and plainness of builders, when proper regard is had to economy, and just honour rendered to provincial custom and local handicraft. These are now so little considered that the chief difficulties I have had in the minute architectural efforts possible at Brantwood have been to persuade my Coniston builder into satisfaction with Coniston slate, and retention of Coniston manners in dressing—or rather, leaving undressed—its primitively fractured edges. If I ever left him alone for a day, some corner stone was sure to be sent for from Bath or Portland, and the ledges I had left to invite stonecrop and swallows, trimmed away in the advanced style of the railway station at Carnforth.[2]

24. There is more, however, to be noted in this little old-fashioned painting than mere delight in weedy eaves and mortarless walls—pre-eminently its repose in such placid subjects of thought as the cottage and its neighbouring wood contain for an easily-pleased observer, without the least recommendation of them by graceful incident or plausible

* All the forms of massive foundation of which the aspect, in buildings of pretension, has been described by this word, took their origin from the palaces in Florence, whose foundations were laid with unchiselled blocks of the grey gritstone of Fésole, and looked like a piece of its crags.

---

[1] [Written before the issue of the small edition of 1890. The passages are not here reprinted, but the references are supplied: see below, p. 448 n.]

[2] [The main additions made to Brantwood by Ruskin were a window-turret, a new dining-room facing the lake, and a new studio. Since his death a further addition contemplated by him has been made, consisting of an enlargement of the drawing-room and the addition of a small sitting-room off it.]

Digitized by Google

story. If we can be content with sunshine on our old brown roof, and the sober green of a commonplace English wood, protected by a still more commonplace tarred paling, and allowing the fancy therefore not to expatiate even so far as the hope of a walk in it—it is well; and if not—poor Prout has no more to offer us, and will not even concede the hope that one of those diagonally-dressed children may be the least pretty, or provoke us, by the gleam of a riband, or quaintness of a toy, into asking so much as what the itinerant pedlar has in his basket.

25. I was waiting for a train the other day at Dover, and in an old-fashioned print-shop on the hill up to the Priory station saw a piece of as old-fashioned picture-making, elaborately engraved, and of curious interest to me, at the moment, with reference to my present essay. It belonged to the dull British school which was founded on conscientious following of the miniature methods and crowded incidents of Dutch painting; and always dutifully proposed to give the spectator as much entertainment as could be collected into the given space of canvas. There was an ideal village street to begin with, the first cottage gable at the corner having more painting (and very good and pretty painting) spent on the mere thatch of it, than there is in the entire Prout drawing under our notice. Beyond the laborious gable came some delicately-branched trees; and then the village street, in and out, half a mile long, with shops, and signs, and what not; and then the orthodox church steeple, and then more trees, and then a sky with rolling white clouds after Wouvermans;—but all this, though the collected quantity of it would have made half-a-dozen country villages, if well pulled out, was only the beginning of the subject. Gable, street, church, rookery, and sky were all, in the painter's mind, too thin and spare entertainment. So out of the gable window looked a frightened old woman; out of the cottage door rushed an angry old man; over the garden palings tumbled two evil-minded boys; after the evil-minded boys rushed an indignantly-minded dog; and

Digitized by Google

in the centre of the foreground, cynosure of the composition, were a couple of fighting-cocks, one fallen, the other crowing for conquest—highly finished, both, from wattle to spur. And the absolute pictorial value of the whole,—church and sky—village and startled inhabitants—vagabond boys, vindictive dog, and victorious bird (the title of the picture being "The Moment of Victory"),—the intrinsic value of the whole, I say, being—not the twentieth part of a Hunt's five-minutes' sketch of one cock's feather.

And yet it was all prettily painted—as I said; and possessed every conceivable quality that can be taught in a school, or bought for money: and the artist who did it had probably, in private life, a fair average quantity of sense and feeling, but had left both out of his picture, in order to imitate what he had been taught was fine, and produce what he expected would pay.

26. Take another instance, more curious, and nearer to matters in hand. The little photograph, No. 117 on the south side of the screen, was made in 1858 (by my own setting of the camera), in the courtyard of one of the prettiest yet remaining fragments of fifteenth-century domestic buildings in Abbeville.[1] The natural vine leaves consent in grace and glow with the life of the old wood carving; and though the modern white porcelain image ill replaces the revolution-deposed Madonna, and only pedestals of saints, and canopies, are left on the propping beams of the gateway—and though the cask, and cooper's tools, and gardener's spade and ladder are little in accord with what was once stately in the gate, and graceful in the winding stair—the declining shadows of the past mingle with the hardship of the present day in no unkindly sadness; and the little angle of courtyard, if tenderly painted in the depression of its fate, has enough still to occupy as much of our best thought as may be modestly claimed for his picture by any master not of the highest order.

[1] [This photograph, here reproduced, is again referred to in *The Eagle's Nest*, § 91. A copy of it is No. 62 in the "Educational Series" in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Photographed by J Ruskin Allen & Co Sc

A Courtyard at Abbeville

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

But these motives of wise and gentle feeling would not appeal to the public mind in competitive exhibition. Such efforts as are made by our own landscapists to keep record of any fast-vanishing scenes of the kind, are scarcely with good will accepted even in our minor art galleries: and leave to share in the lustre of the Parisian "Salon de 1878" could only be hoped for by the author of the composition from which the photograph, No. 118,[1] is taken, on condition of his giving pungency to the feeble savour of architectural study by a condiment of love, assassination, and despair.

27. It will not, I trust, be supposed that in anything I have said, or may presently further say, I have the smallest intention of diminishing the praise of nobly dramatic or pathetic pictures. The best years of my life have been spent in the endeavour to illustrate the neglected greatest of these, in Venice, Milan, and Rome; while my last and most deliberate writings have lost much of their influence with the public by disagreeably insisting that the duty of a great painter was rather to improve them than amuse. But it remains always a sure elementary principle that interest in the story of pictures does not in the least signify a relative interest in the art of painting, or in the continual beauty and calm virtue of nature; and that the wholesomest manner in which the intelligence of young people can be developed (I may say, even the intelligence of modest old people cultivated) in matters of this kind, is by inducing them accurately to understand what painting is as mere painting, and music as mere music, before they are led into further question of the uses of either, in policy, morals, or religion.

28. And I cannot but recollect with feelings of considerable refreshment, in these days of the deep, the lofty, and the mysterious, what a simple company of connoisseurs we were, who crowded into happy meeting, on the first Mondays in Mays of long ago, in the bright large room of the Old Water-Colour Society;[2] and discussed, with holiday

[1] [See below, p. 437. The editors are, however, unable to identify the picture of Abbeville referred to, as the catalogue of the Salon contains none so entitled.]

[2] [See note on p. 73; and compare *The Art of England*, § 159.]

Digitized by Google

gaiety, the unimposing merits of the favourites, from whose pencils we knew precisely what to expect, and by whom we were never either disappointed or surprised. Copley Fielding[1] used to paint fishing-boats for us, in a fresh breeze, "Off Dover," "Off Ramsgate," "Off the Needles,"—off everywhere on the south coast where anybody had been last autumn; but we were always kept pleasantly in sight of land, and never saw so much as a gun fired in distress. Mr. Robson would occasionally paint a Bard, on a heathery crag in Wales; or, it might be, a Lady of the Lake on a similar piece of Scottish foreground—"Benvenue in the distance." A little fighting, in the time of Charles the First, was permitted to Mr. Cattermole; and Mr. Cristall would sometimes invite virtuous sympathy to attend the meeting of two lovers at a Wishing-gate or a Holy Well.[2] But the farthest flights even of these poetical members of the Society were seldom beyond the confines of the British Islands; the vague dominions of the air, and vasty ones of the deep, were held to be practically unvoyageable by our un-Dædal pinions, and on the safe level of our native soil, the sturdy statistics of Mr. de Wint, and blunt pastorals of Mr. Cox, restrained within the limits of probability and sobriety alike the fancy of the idle and the ambition of the vain.[3]

29. It became, however, by common and tacit consent, Mr. Prout's privilege, and it remained his privilege exclusively, to introduce foreign elements of romance and amazement into this—perhaps slightly fenny—atmosphere of English common sense. In contrast with our Midland locks

[1] [For Copley Fielding, see General Index; for Robson, Vol. III. p. 193 *n.*; and for Cattermole, Vol. III. p. 46 *n.* Joshua Cristall (1767–1847) was one of the foundation members of the Old Water-Colour Society, and three times its President. Several of his drawings are in the Victoria and Albert (South Kensington) Museum.]

[2] [The MS. adds:—

> "But we did not in the least demand for our Mayday entertainment to be either thrilled, appalled, or puzzled; nor were we at all disposed to bring our business cares into questions of art investment. When we bought a drawing we had not the least intention of selling it again; and we did not care in a general way to give more than 15 or 20 guineas for it."]

[3] [For De Wint and Cox, see the references given in Vol. I. p. 427 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

and barges, his "On the Grand Canal, Venice," was an Arabian enchantment; among the mildly elegiac country churchyards of Llangollen or Stoke Pogis, his "Sepulchral Monuments at Verona" were Shakespearian tragedy; and to us who had just come into the room out of Finsbury or Mincing Lane, his "Street in Nuremberg" was a German fairy tale. But we none of us recognized then (and I know not how far any of us recognize yet), that these feelings of ours were dependent on the mediation of a genius as earnest as it was humble, doing work not in its essence romantic at all; but, on the contrary, the only quite useful, faithful, and evermore serviceable work that the Society—by hand of any of its members—had ever done, or could ever, in that phase of its existence, do: containing, moreover, a statement of certain social facts only to be gathered, and image of certain pathetic beauties only to be seen, at that particular moment in the history of (what we are pleased to call) civilization.[1]

30. "As earnest," I repeat, "as it was humble." The drawings actually shown on the Exhibition walls gave no sufficient clue to Prout's real character, and no intimation whatever of his pauseless industry. He differed, in these unguessed methods of toil, wholly from the other members of the Society. De Wint's morning and afternoon sketches from Nature, with a few solidifying touches, were at once ready for their frames. Fielding's misty downs and dancing seas were softened into their distances of azure, and swept into their hollows of foam, at his ease, in his study, with conventional ability and lightly burdened memory. Hunt's models lay on the little table at his side all day; or stood as long as he liked by the barn-door, for a penny. But Prout's had to be far sought, and with difficulty detailed and secured—the figures gliding on the causeway or mingling in the market-place, stayed not his leisure; and his drawings prepared for the Water-colour room were

[1] [For this aspect of Prout's work, see the earlier essay, Vol. XII. pp. 314, 315.]

Digitized by Google

usually no more than mechanical abstracts, made absolutely for support of his household, from the really vivid sketches which, with the whole instinct and joy of his nature, he made all through the cities of ancient Christendom, without an instant of flagging energy, and without a thought of money payment. They became to him afterwards a precious library, of which he never parted with a single volume as long as he lived. But it was the necessary consequence of the devotion of his main strength to the obtaining of these studies, that at his death they remained a principal part of the provision left for his family, and were therefore necessarily scattered. I cannot conceive any object more directly tending to the best interests of our students both in art and history, than the reassembling a chosen series of them for the nation, as opportunity may be given.

81. Let me, however, before entering on any special notice of those which Mr. Huish has been able at this time (and I myself by the good help of the painter's son, Mr. Gillespie Prout), to obtain for exhibition, state in all clearness the terms under which they should be judged, and may be enjoyed. For just as we ought not to match a woodblock of Bewick's against a fresco by Correggio, we must not compare a pencil outline of Prout's with any such ideals of finished street effect as Flemish painting once produced. Prout is not a colourist, nor in any extended or complete sense of the word a painter. He is essentially a draughtsman with the lead pencil, as Dürer was essentially a draughtsman with the burin, and Bewick on the woodblock. And the chief art-virtue of the pieces here exhibited is the intellectual abstraction which represents many features of things with few lines.[1]

82. Take the little view in Amiens, No. 7, showing the west front of the cathedral in the distance. That front is enriched with complex ranks of arcade and pinnacle, which it would take days to outline perfectly, and which, seen at

[1] [Compare "The Black Arts," § 3, p. 359, above.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Amiens

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

the distance assumed in this drawing, gather into a mystery which no fineness of hand could imitatively follow. But all this has been abstracted into a few steady lines, with an intelligence of choice and precision of notation which build the cathedral as if it stood there, and in such accurate likeness that it could be recognized at a glance from every other mass of Gothic in Europe.[1]

That drawing dependent on abstraction of this kind, in which forms are expressed rather as a mineralogist would draw a crystal than with any investing mystery of shade or effect, cannot be carried beyond the point assigned, nor convey any sense of extreme beauty or majesty when these really exist in its subject, must be conceded at once, and in full. But there is a great deal of scenery in this Europe of ours not lovely, and a great deal of habitation in this Europe of ours not sublime, yet both extremely worthy of being recorded in a briefly crystalline manner. And with scenes only, and dwellings only, of this ruder nature, Prout is concerned.

33. Take, for instance, the general facts respecting the valley of the Somme, collected in this little sketch of Amiens. That river, and the Oise, with other neighbouring minor streams, flow through a chalk district intersected by very ancient valleys, filled mostly with peat up to sea-level, but carrying off a large portion of the rainfall over the whole surface of the upper plains, which, open and arable,

[1] [The MS. here adds :—

> ". . . ; and we may say of the piece of painting, just as positively as of a Greek statue or Holbein portrait, 'It cannot be better done.' No one knows the difficulty of doing it as well who has not tried it with the same sincerity of affection for Amiens, and the same degree of disaffection for himself, neither being at all common, the disaffection for oneself especially. For if indeed one cares for Gothic or for Amiens, or for one's own notions of either, it is almost impossible to stop from drawing this bit of steeple, and that bit of tracery, and the other bit of buttress, and one little window in a particular roof—and so on—till the paper is covered with a quantity of detached memoranda, or detached endeavours at memoranda, pushed to failure—but nothing that will explain itself to others, or be touching and impressive as a total reality."

For the saying "It cannot be better done," see Vol. V. p. 331; Vol. VI. p. 159; Vol. XI. p. 14.]

Digitized by Google

retain scarcely any moisture in morasses, pools, or deep grass. The rivers, therefore, though with little fall, run always fast and brimful, divided into many serviceable branches and runlets; while the older villages and cities on their banks are built of timber and brick, or, in the poorer cottages, timber and clay; but their churches of an adhesive and durable chalk rock, yielding itself with the utmost ease to dexterities of deep incision, and relieving, at first with lace-like whiteness, and always with a pleasant pearly grey, the shadows so obtained. No sensual arts or wealthy insolences have ever defiled or distorted the quiet temper of the northern French race; and in this busy little water-street of Amiens (you see that Prout has carefully indicated its rapid current—a navigable and baptismal brook, past step and door—water that one can float with and wash with, not a viscous vomit of black poison, like an English river) you have clearly pictured to you a state of peasant life assembled in the fellowship of a city, yet with as little pride as if still in the glades of Arden, and united chiefly for the sake of mere neighbourliness, and the sense of benediction and guardianship in the everywhere visible pinnacles of the temple built by their fathers, nor yet forsaken by their fathers' God.[1]

All this can be enough told in a few rightly laid pencil lines, and more it is needless to tell of so lowly provincial life.

Needless, at least, for the general public. For the closer student of architecture, finer drawing may be needed; but even for such keener requirement Prout will not, for a time, fail us.

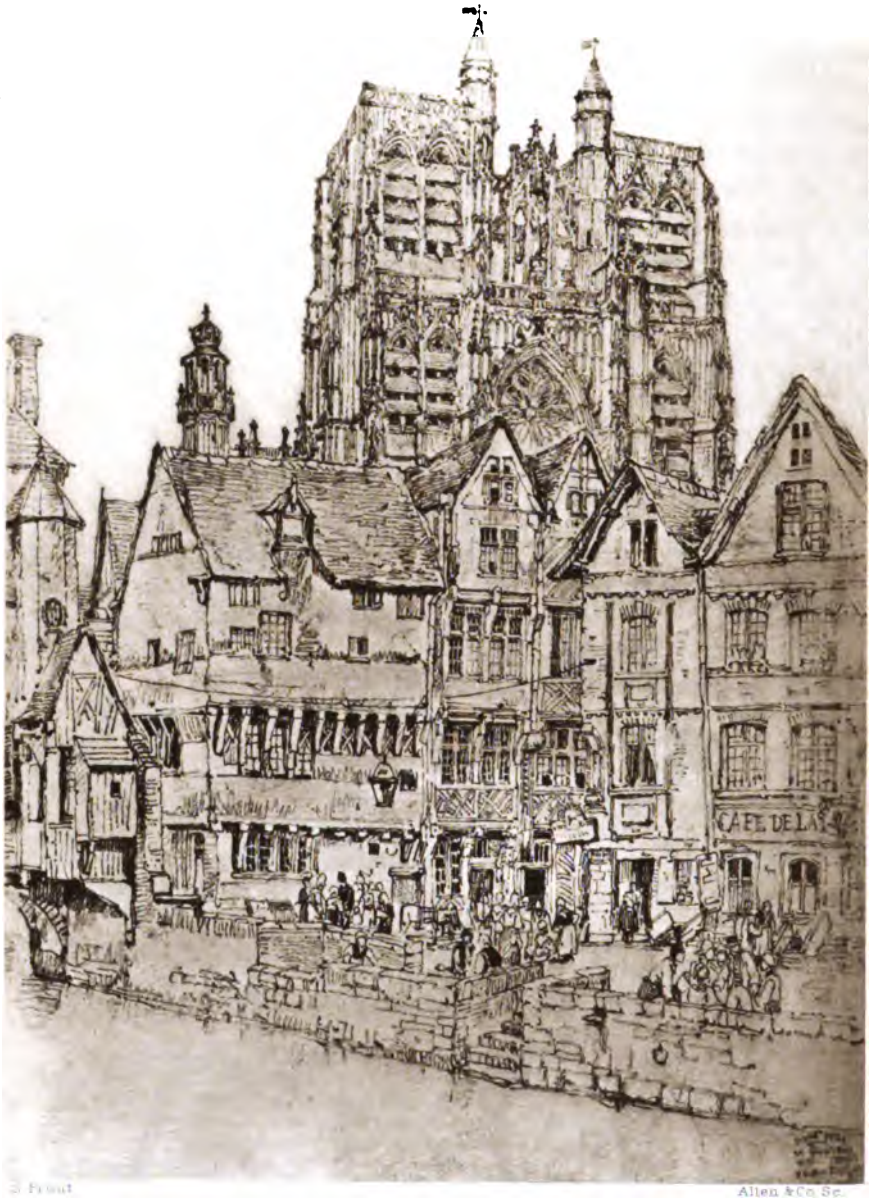
34. Five-and-twenty miles down the Somme lies the little ramparted town of Abbeville;[2] rampart only of the

[1] [It will be remembered that "Our Fathers have Told us" (Psalm xliv. 1) was the title chosen by Ruskin for an intended series of historical books, of which the first —*The Bible of Amiens*—was issued in 1883–1885. With the description here given of the country around Amiens, compare ch. i. of that book ("By the Rivers of Waters"); *Præterita*, i. ch. ix. §§ 177–181; and the lecture (not hitherto printed) on "The Flamboyant Architecture of the Valley of the Somme," included in a later volume of this edition.]

[2] [See, again, *Præterita*, i. ch. ix., for a fuller description of Abbeville.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Prout Allen & Co. Sc.

Abbeville

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Grand Monarque's time, but the walls of might long ago, in the days of Créçy; and few French provincial bourgs had then more numerous or beautiful monasteries, hospitals, chapels, and churches. Of the central St. Wulfran, never completed, there remain only the colossal nave, the ruined transept walls, and the lordly towers and porches of the west front. The drawing No. 4, quite one of the best examples of Prout's central time in the room, most faithfully represents this western pile of tracery and fretwork, with the filial richness of the timber houses that once stood round it.

None of the beautiful ones here seen are now left; and one day, perhaps, even France herself will be grateful to the wandering Londoner, who drew them as they once were, and copied, without quite understanding, every sign and word on them.

And as one of the few remaining true records of fifteenth-century France, such as her vestiges remained after all the wreck of revolution and recoil of war had passed over them, this pencil drawing, slight as it seems, may well take rank beside any pen-sketch by Holbein in Augsburg or Gentile Bellini in Venice. As a piece of composition and general treatment it might be reasoned on for days; for the cunning choices of omission, the delicate little dexterities of adjustment — the accents without vulgarity, and reticences without affectation—the exactly enough everywhere, to secure an impression of reality, and the instant pause at the moment when another touch would have been tiresome,—are, in the soberest truth, more wonderful than most of the disciplined compositions of the greater masters, for no scruple checks *them* for an instant in changing or introducing what they choose; but Prout gives literal, and all but servile, portrait, only managing somehow to get the checkers of woodwork to carry down the richness of the towers into the houses; then to get the broad white wall of the nearer houses to contrast with both; and then sets the transept turret to peep over the roof just enough to etherealize its

Digitized by Google

practicality, and the black figure to come in front of it to give lustre to its whiteness; and so on throughout, down to the last and minutest touches: — the incomprehensiblest classical sonata is not more artificial — the sparklingest painted window not more vivid, and the sharpest photograph not half so natural.

85. In sequence of this drawing, I may point out seven others of like value, equally estimable and unreplaceable, both in matters of Art, and—I use the word, as will be seen presently,[1] in its full force—of History,—namely:

No. 9. Evreux.
No. 10. Strasburg.
No. 19. Antwerp.
No. 47. Domo d'Ossola.
No. 48. Como.
No. 65. Bologna.
No. 71. The Coliseum.

I choose these eight drawings (counting the Abbeville), four belonging to North France and Germany, four to Italy, of which the Northern ones do indeed utterly represent the spirit of the architecture chosen; but the Southern subjects are much more restricted in expression, for Prout was quite unable to draw the buildings of the highest Italian school: yet he has given the vital look of Italy in his day more truly than any other landscapist, be he who he may; and not excepting even Turner, for *his* ideal is always distinctly Turnerian, and not the mere blunt and sorrowful fact.

86. You might perhaps, and very easily, think at first that these Prout subjects were as much "Proutized" (Copley Fielding first used that word to me[2]) as Turner's were Turnerized. They are not so, by any manner of means—or rather, they are so by manner and means only, not by sight or heart. Turner saw things as Shelley or Keats did;

[1] [See the next section, and compare Vol. IV. p. 382, and Vol. XII. p. 151.]
[2] [See for Ruskin's former use of the word, Vol. IX. p. 303 n.]

Digitized by Google

and with perfectly comprehensive power, gave all that such eyes can summon, to gild, or veil, the fatalities of material truth.[1] But Prout saw only what all the world sees, what is substantially and demonstrably there; and drew that reality in his much-arrested and humble manner indeed, but with perfectly apostolic faithfulness. He reflected the scene like some rough old Etruscan mirror—jagged, broken, blurred, if you will, but *It*, the thing itself still; while Turner gives *it*, and himself too, and ever so much of fairyland besides. His Florence or Nemi[2] compels me to think, as a scholar, or (for so much of one as may be in me) a poet; but Prout's harbour of old Como is utterly and positively the very harbour I landed in when I was a boy of fourteen, after a day's rowing from Cadenabbia, and it makes me young again, and hot, and happy, to look at it.[3] And that Bologna! Well, the tower *does* lean a little too far over, certainly; but what blessedness to be actually there, and to think we shall be in Venice to-morrow!

37. But note that the first condition of all these really great drawings (as indeed for all kinds of other good), is unaffectedness. If ever Prout strains a nerve, or begins to think what other people will say or feel—nay, if he ever allows his own real faculty of chiaroscuro to pronounce itself consciously, he falls into fourth and fifth rate work directly;[4] and the entire force of him can be found only where it has been called into cheerful exertion by subjects moderately, yet throughout, delightful to him; which present no difficulties to be conquered, no discords to be reconciled, and have just enough of clarion in them to rouse him to his paces, without provoking him to prance or capriole.

38. I should thus rank the drawing of Como (48) as

[1] [As an instance of the polishing which this preface received on revision, we may here give the MS. version:—

> "Turner *saw* the thing other than it was; and with perfectly comprehensive and unarrested power painted it in a certain sense other than it was—as none but he ever saw it, or will see. But Prout . . ."]

[2] [Both in Ruskin's collection. See Vol. XIII. pp. 424, 426.]

[3] [Ruskin describes his first visit to the Lake of Como in *Præterita*, i. ch. vi.]

[4] [Compare Vol. XII. p. 385, where the same point is made in the case of Turner.]

Digitized by Google

quite of the first class, and in the front rank of that class. Unattractive at first, its interest will increase every moment that you stay by it; and every little piece of it is a separate picture, all the better in itself for its subjection to the whole.

You may at first think the glassless windows too black. But nothing can be too black for an open window in a sunny Italian wall, at so short a distance. You may think the hills too light, but nothing can be too light for olive hills in midday summer. "They would have come dark against the sky?" Yes, certainly; but we don't pretend to draw Italian skies,—only the ruined port of Como, which is verily here before us—(alas! at Como no more, having long since been filled up, levelled, and gravelled, and made an "esplanade" for modern Italy to spit over in its idle afternoons). But take the lens to the old group of houses:—they will become as interesting as a missal illumination if you only look carefully enough to see how Prout varied those twenty-seven black holes, so that literally not one of them shall be like another. The grand old Comasque builder of the twelfth century arches below (the whole school of Lombardic masonry being originally Comasque[1]) varied them to his hand enough in height and width; but he invents a new tiny picture in chiaroscuro to put under every arch, and then knits all together with the central boats;—literally knits, for you see the mast of one of them catches up the cross-stick—stitch we might call it—that the clothes hung on between the balconies; and then the little figures on the left catch up the pillars like meshes in basket-work; and then the white awning of the boat on the left repeats the mass of wall, taking the stiffness out of it; while the reflections of arches, with the other figures, and the near black freights, carry all the best of it, broken and rippling, to the hither[2] shore.

[1] [Compare Plate 5 (of an arch in the Broletto at Como) in Vol. X.; and for remarks on the Comasque buildings as typical of the Lombardic school, see *ibid.*, pp. 131, 174, 394.]

[2] [So in the MS.; "bitter" in all previous editions—an obvious misprint.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Allen & Co. Sc.

Como

[illegible] in the possession of Mrs Kennedy

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

39. But the drawing of the Coliseum at Rome, No. 71, has still higher claim to our consideration; in it were reserved, and in all points, rarer powers of expressing magnitude and solitude. It is so majestic in manner that it would quite have borne being set beside the photograph of Turner's drawing at Farnley[1]—had it been fair to match mere outline against a finished composition. For Prout was, and he remains, the only one of our artists who entirely shared Turner's sense of magnitude, as the sign of past human effort or of natural force; and I must be so far tedious as to explain this metaphysical point at some length.[2] Of all forms of artistic susceptibility, reverent perception of true * magnitude is the rarest. No general conclusion has become more clear to my experience than this —strange as it may seem at first statement—that a painter's mind, *typically*, recognizes no charm in physical vastness; and will, if it must choose between two evils, by preference work on a reduced rather than an enlarged scale—and for subject, paint miniature rather than mass. Human form is always given by the great masters either of the natural size, or somewhat less (unless under fixed conditions of distance which require perspective enlargement), and no sort or shadow of pleasure is ever taken by the strongest designers in bulk of matter. Veronese never paints shafts of pillars more than two feet in diameter or thereabouts, and only from fifteen to twenty feet in height. Titian's beech trunks in the Peter Martyr[3] were not a foot across at the thickest, while his mountains are merely blue spaces of

* Reckless accumulation of *false* magnitude—as by John Martin—is merely a vulgar weakness of brain, allied to nightmare; so also the colossal works of decadent states in sculpture and architecture, which are always insolent, not reverent.[4]

---

[1] [A large drawing, 16 in. × 12, made between 1803–1820; still at Farnley.]

[2] [On this point see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. (Vol. V. p. 177), and the additional passage from the MS. (*ibid.*, pp. 433–436, where other references are given); see also *Aratra Pentelici*, § 145.]

[3] [For this picture, now destroyed, see Vol. III. p. 28 *n.*, and compare p. 74, above.]

[4] [For other references to the work of Martin, see Vol. I. p. 243; Vol. III. pp. 36, 38.]

Digitized by Google

graceful shape, and are never accurately enough drawn to give even a suggestion of scale. And in the entire range of Venetian marine painting there is not one large wave.

40. Among our own recent landscape painters, while occasionally great feeling is shown for space, or mystery, there is none for essential magnitude. Stanfield was just as happy in drawing the East Cliff at Hastings as the Rock of Ischia;[1] and painted the little sandy jut of crag far better than the coned volcano. Fielding asked for no more stupendous summits than those of Saddleback or Wrynose; and never attempted the grandeur even of Yorkshire scars, finding their articulated geology troublesome. Sometimes David Roberts made a praiseworthy effort to explain the size of a pillar at Thebes, or a tower in the Alhambra; but only in cases where the character of largeness had been forced upon his attention as the quality to be observed by himself, and recommended to the observation of others. He never felt, or would have tried to make any one else feel, the weight of an ordinary boulder stone, or the hollow of an old chestnut stem, or the height of a gathering thunder-cloud. In the real apprehension of measurable magnitude, magnitude in things clearly seen—stones, trees, clouds, or towers—Turner and Prout stand—they two—absolutely side by side—otherwise companionless.

41. *Measurable* magnitude, observe—and therefore wonderful. If you can't see the difference between the domes of the National Gallery and of St. Paul's—much more if you can't see the difference between Shanklin Chine and the Via Mala (and most people can't!)—you will never care either for Turner or Prout; nor can you care rightly for them unless you have an intellectual pleasure in construction, and know and feel that it is more difficult to build a tower securely four hundred feet high than forty—and that the pillar of cloud above the crater of Etna, standing two thousand feet forth from the lips of it, means a natural

[1] [See *Academy Notes*, 1859, p. 224 of this volume.]

Digitized by Google

force greater than the puff of a railway boiler. The quiet and calm feeling of reverence for this kind of power, and the accurate habit of rendering it (see notes on the sketches of Strasburg, No. 10, and Drachenfels, No. 28), are always connected, so far as I have observed, with some parallel justice in the estimate of spiritual order and power in human life and its laws; nor is there any faculty of my own mind—among those to which I owe whatever useful results it may have reached—of which I am so gratefully conscious.[1]

42. There is one further point—and if my preface has hitherto been too garrulous, it must be grave in notice of this at the close—in which Turner, Bewick, Hunt,[2] and Prout, all four agree,—that they can draw the poor, but not the rich. They acknowledge with affection, whether for principal or accessory subjects of their art, the British farmer, the British sailor,* the British market-woman, and

* Including, of course, the British soldier; but for Turner, a ship of the line was pictorially better material than a field battery, else he would just as gladly have painted Albuera as Trafalgar. I am intensely anxious, by the way, to find out where a small picture of his greatest time may now be dwelling,—a stranded English frigate engaging the batteries on the French coast at sunset (she got off at the flood-tide in the morning).[3] I want to get it, if possible, for the St. George's Museum at Sheffield. For the rest, I think the British gentleman may partly see his way to the answer of the above question if he will faithfully consider with himself how it comes to pass that, always fearless in the field, he is cowardly in the House,—and always generous in the field, is yet meanly cunning, and —too often—malignant, in the House.

---

[1] [Ruskin alludes again to this faculty of his mind in *Præterita*, i. ch. vi. § 136, and in the Preface (§ 9) to the 1883 reprint of vol. ii. of *Modern Painters* (Vol. IV. p. 8).]

[2] [“Hunt was not insensible to his want of power to depict genteel life, nor wholly without regret that it should be so. His correspondence with an intimate friend contains the following lament: ‘I do not wish it to be known what I had to do for Mr. R——, but have no other objection to tell you, only that I am ashamed to say that I broke down: it was to make a drawing of Mrs. R——. I think I could have made a nice drawing of her if she had been one of my tramp girls. I think her very beautiful.’ ‘I wish,’ he says in another letter, ‘I could get a very beautiful face to paint from, so that I might, by taking a long time, try if I could not, although I broke down with Mrs. R——, still do something that way. It is a different thing having a lady to sit, to a model that you pay and can have at your command at any time.’”—Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, ii. 190.]

[3] [The editors have not been able to find any trace of this picture.]

Digitized by Google

the British workman. They agree unanimously in ignoring the British gentleman. Let the British gentleman lay it to heart, and ask himself why.

The general answer is long, and manifold.[1] But, with respect to the separate work of Prout, there is a very precious piece of instruction in it, respecting national prosperity and policy, which may be gathered with a few glances.

You see how all his best pieces depend on figures either crowded in market-places, or pausing (lounging, it may be) in quiet streets,—you will not find, in the entire series of subjects here assembled from his hand, a single figure in a hurry! He ignores, you see, not only the British gentleman, but every necessary condition, nowadays, of British business!

Look again, and see if you can find a single figure exerting all its strength. A couple of men rolling a single cask, perhaps; here and there a woman with rather a large bundle on her head—any more athletic display than these, you seek in vain.

He ignores even the British boat-race—and British muscular divinity, and British muscular art.

His figures are all as quiet as the Cathedral of Chartres! "Because he could not make them move"—think you? Nay, not so. Some of them (that figure on the sands in the "Calais," for instance) you can scarcely think are standing still—but they all move quietly. The real reason is that *he* understood, and *we* do not, the meaning of the word "quiet."

43. He understood it, personally, and for himself: practically, and for others. Take this one fact—of his quiet dealings with men—and think over it. In his early days he had established a useful and steady connection with the country dealers—that is to say, with the leading printsellers in the county towns and principal watering-places. He supplied them with pretty drawings of understood size and

[1] [It is partly discussed above, p. 223.]

Digitized by Google

price, which were nearly always in tranquil demand by the better class of customers. The understood size was about 10 inches by 14 or 15, and the fixed price six guineas. The dealer charged from seven to ten, according to the pleasantness of the drawing. I bought the "Venice," for instance, No. 55, from Mr. Hewitt of Leamington, for eight guineas.

The modern fashionable interest in what we suppose to be art, had just begun to show itself a few years before Prout's death; and he was frequently advised to raise his prices. But he never raised them a shilling to his old customers.*[1] They were supplied with all the drawings they wanted, at six guineas each—to the end. A very peaceful method of dealing, and under the true ancient laws ordained by Athena of the Agora,[2] and St. James of the Rialto.[3]

44. Athena, observe, of the Agora, or Market *Place;* and St. James of the Deep Stream, or Market *River*. The Angels of Honest Sale and Honest Porterage; such honest porterage being the true grandeur of the Grand Canal, and of all other canals, rivers, sounds, and seas that ever moved in wavering morris under the night. And the eternally electric light of the embankment of that Rialto stream was

* Nor greatly to his new ones. The drawings made for the Water-colour room were usually more elaborate, and, justly, a little higher in price; but my father bought the Lisieux, No. 13, off its walls, for eighteen guineas.

---

[1] ["Mr. Alfred Fripp relates that on his first serving in 1850 on the Hanging Committee of the Society, with Prout and others, he was 'lectured' (not unkindly) by the veteran member on the sin of a young man's asking higher prices for his works, Prout citing his own early practice by way of example, when 'he was content with two-and-sixpence for his small drawings,' and delighted and surprised when Ackermann in the Strand 'raised his prices to five shillings.'"—Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, i. 350 *n*. Some interesting particulars of Prout's prices in later years, supplementing what Ruskin says, will be found at p. 57 of vol. ii. of the same work.]

[2] [For "Athena of the Agora," and "Britannia of the Market," see *The Crown of Wild Olive*, § 73.]

[3] [The reference is to the inscription discovered by Ruskin on the Church of St. James of the Rialto: "Around this Temple let the merchant's law be just, his weights true, and his covenants faithful." See *St. Mark's Rest*, chs. iii. and viii.; *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 76; and *Arrows of the Chace* (1880), i. 245.]

Digitized by Google

consummate virtue. But the magnificent certainty and ease, united, which it enabled him to obtain, are only seen to the full in drawings of his middle time. Not in decrepitude, but in mistaken effort, for which, to my sorrow, I was partly myself answerable, he endeavoured in later journeys to make his sketches more accurate in detail of tracery and sculpture;[1] and they lost in feeling what they gained in technical exactness and elaboration. Of these later drawings only three are included in this series, 4, 8, and 17; their peculiar character will, however, be at once discernible.

His incipient work was distinguished by two specialities—the use of a grey washed tint with the pencil, a practice entirely abandoned in his great time (though he will always make notes of *colour* frankly); and the insisting on minor pieces of broken texture, in small stones, bricks, grass, or any little picturesque incidents, with loss of largeness and repose. The little study of the apse of Worms Cathedral (32), a most careful early drawing, shows these faults characteristically; the Prague (23) is as definite an example of his great central manner, and even Turner's outline is not more faultless, though more complete. For the rest, Turner himself shared in the earlier weakness of more sharply dotted and sprinkled black touches, and practised, contemporaneously, the wash of grey tint with the pencil. The chief use of the method to the young student is in its compelling him to divide his masses clearly; and I used it much myself in early sketches, such as that of the Aventine, No. 104*a*,[2] for mere cleanliness and comfort in security of shadow—rather than the always rubbing and vanishing blacklead. But it is an entirely restricted method, and must be abandoned in all advanced study, and the pencil used alone, both for shade and line, until the finer gradations of shadow are understood. *Then* colour may be used with the pencil

[1] [The reference is to a passage in the first volume of *Modern Painters* (1st and 2nd eds. only), where Ruskin complained that for the delicate detail of Venetian architecture, Prout gave only "five straight strokes of a reed pen" (Vol. III. p. 256, and compare *ibid.*, p. 662).]

[2] [This is the drawing of 1841, reproduced opposite p. 454 in Vol. I.]

Digitized by Google

for notation, and every power at once is in the workman's hands. The two first studies in our series are perfect instances of this conclusive method.*

There were more reasons, and better ones, than the students of to-day would suppose, for his not adopting it oftener. The subjects in Cornwall and Derbyshire by which his mind was first formed, were most of them wholly discouraging in colour, if not gloomy or offensive. Grey blocks of whinstone, black timbers, and broken walls of clay needed no iridescent illustration; the heath and stonecrop were beyond his skill, and, had he painted them with the staunchest efforts, would not have been translatable into the coarse lithographs for Ackermann's drawing-books, the publication of which was at that time a principal source of income to him.[1] His richer Continental subjects of later times were often quite as independent of colour, and in nearly every case taken under circumstances rendering its imitation impossible. He might be permitted by indulgent police to stop a thoroughfare for an hour or two with a crowd of admirers, but by no means to settle himself in a comfortable tent upon the pavement for a couple of months, or set up a gipsy encampment of pots and easel in the middle of the market-place. Also, his constitution, as delicate as it was sanguine,[2] admitted indeed of his sitting without harm for half-an-hour in a shady lane, or basking for part of the

* For further notes on the methods of shade proper to the great masters, the reader may consult the third and fourth numbers of my *Laws of Fésole*.[3]

---

[1] [Prout's work is divided into two clearly-defined periods. In the first, he drew only English scenery. In 1819 he made his first tour on the Continent, and thenceforward devoted himself almost entirely to foreign subjects. The first of "Ackermann's drawing-books," referred to in the text, was entitled *Rudiments of Landscape, in Progressive Studies. Drawn and etched in imitation of chalk, by Samuel Prout.* London, R. Ackermann, 101 Strand, 1813. Other volumes of a similar kind were published at various dates between 1819 and 1821. Many of Prout's foreign drawings were also published by Ackermann.]

[2] [Prout suffered from a pulmonary affection. Some of his familiar letters are eloquent alike of his sufferings and of his cheerfulness: see Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, ii. 55–59.]

[3] [By the "numbers" Ruskin refers to the parts in which the *Laws of Fésole* originally appeared. See ch. x. of the work as it now stands.]

Digitized by Google

forenoon in a sunny piazza, but would have broken down at once under the continuous strain necessary to paint a picture in the open air. And under these conditions the wonder is only how he did so much that was attentive and true, and that even his most conventional water-colours are so refined in light and shade that even the slightest become almost majestic when engraved.

1. Calais Town.

Sketch on the spot, of the best time and highest quality, —the clouds put in as they stood, the brig as she lay, the figures where they measure the space of sand, and give the look of busy desolateness, which poor Calais—crown jewel of England—had fallen to in our day, Prout's and mine. You see the size of the steam-packet of the period: you may trust Prout's measure of its magnitude, as aforesaid.[1] So also of belfry, lighthouse, and church,—very dear all to the old painter, as to me. I gave my own drawing of the lighthouse and belfry (No. 104, on the screen) to the author of *Rab and his Friends*, who has lent it me for comparison.* My drawing of the church spire is lost to me, but somewhere about in the world, I hope, and perhaps may be yet got hold of, and kept with this drawing, for memory of old Calais, and illustration of what was meant by the opening passage of the fourth volume of *Modern Painters*. (Appendix II.)[2]

Take the lens † to the gate of the tower (above the

* It was exhibited here last year, but is shown again for proof of Prout's fidelity in distant form.[3]

† For proper study of any good work in painting or drawing the student should always have in his hand a magnifying-glass of moderate power, from two to three inches in diameter.

---

[1] [Above, p. 400.]

[2] [See below, p. 448 *n*. Compare also *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 186, where Prout's drawing is referred to as "a little idealizing" the belfry.]

[3] [For Dr. John Brown, see above, p. 359 *n*. The drawing has been lent for reproduction here by Dr. Brown's son; that of the church spire has not been found.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Calais

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Allen & Co. Sc

Calais: Lighthouse and Belfry
(1842)
From the drawing in the possession of John Brown Esq

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

steamer) and see how, in such a little bit, the architecture is truly told. Compare Hogarth's "Gate of Calais."[1]

2. Calais Old Pier.

Turner's great subject;[2] but Turner's being earlier taken, while the English packet was still only a fast-sailing cutter —(steam unthought of!) A perfect gem of masterful study, and quiet feeling of the facts of eternal sea and shore.

The solemnly rendered mystery of the deep and far sea; the sway of the great waves entering over the bar at the harbour's mouth; the ebbing away of the sand at the angle of the pier; the heaping of it in hills against its nearer side,* and the way in which all is made huge, bleak, and wild by the deepest tone of the dark sail and figure, are all efforts of the highest art faculty, which we cannot too much honour and thank.

3. Studies of French and Netherland Figures and Diligences.

Exemplary in the manner of abstract, and perfect in figure drawing, for *his* purposes. They are poor persons, you see — all of them. Not quite equal to Miss Kate Greenaway's in grace, nor to Mrs. Allingham's in face— (they, therefore, you observe, have mostly their backs to us). But both Miss Kate and Mrs. Allingham might do better duty to their day, and better honour to their art, if they would paint, as verily, some of these poor country people in far-away places, rather than the high-bred prettinesses, or fond imaginations, which are the best they have given us yet for antidote to the misery of London.[3]

* Compare the sentence respecting this same place, Appendix II., "surfy sand, and hillocked shore."[4]

[1] [Now in the National Gallery. No. 1464.]
[2] [For Turner's various representations of it, see Vol. XII. p. 380.]
[3] [For Mrs. Allingham, see above, p. 264; and see *The Art of England*, Lecture iv. ("Fairyland: Mrs. Allingham and Kate Greenaway.").]
[4] [For the reference, see below, p. 448 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

4. ABBEVILLE: CHURCH OF ST. WULFRAN.[1]

Seen from the west, over old houses (since destroyed). Of the artist's best time and manner. See Preface, p. 395.

5. ABBEVILLE: CHURCH OF ST. WULFRAN—THE NORTH-WESTERN TOWER, WITH OLD HOUSES.

Elaborate. Of the late time, but not in the highest degree good — the chiaroscuro of the pinnacles evidently caught on the spot, but not carried through the drawing rightly, and the whole much mannered. Precious, however, for all that.

6. PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PORCHES OF ST. WULFRAN, ABBEVILLE.

7. AMIENS.

One of the best of the best time. See Preface, p. 392, and compare the extract from *Modern Painters*, given in Appendix III.[2]

8. CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE IN ST. JACQUES, DIEPPE.

One of the best studies of the last period. See further notes on it under the number 17 [p. 417].

9. EVREUX.

Perfect sketch of the best time, and most notable for the exquisite grace of proportion in its wooden belfry.[3] No

[1] [For this church, see *Seven Lamps* (Vol. VIII. p. 165); Vol. XII. p. 92 *n.*; and *Præterita*, i. ch. ix. §§ 179, 181.]

[2] [For the reference, see below, p. 448 *n.*]

[3] ["My best joys were in small pieces of provincial building, full of character, and naturally graceful and right in their given manner. In this kind the little wooden belfry of Evreux, of which Prout's drawing is photographed in my Memoir, is consummate."—*Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 186. The "Memoir" is the illustrated edition (1880) of these Notes.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Evreux

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

architect, however accurate in his measurements—no artist, however sensitive in his admiration—ever gave the proportion and grace of Gothic spires and towers with the loving fidelity that Prout did. This is much to say, and therefore I say it again deliberately—there are no existing true records of the real effect of Gothic towers and spires, except only Prout's. And now I must be tedious awhile, and explain what I mean in saying this—being much—and show it to be true. Observe, first — everything in grace of form depends on truth of scale. You don't show how graceful a thing is, till you show how large it is; for all grace means ultimately the use of strength in the right way, moral and physical against a given force. A swan no bigger than a butterfly would not be graceful; its grace is in its proportion to the waves, and power over them. A butterfly as large as a swan would not be graceful; its beauty is in being so small that the winds play with it, but do not vex it. A hollow traceried spire fifteen feet high would be effeminate and frivolous, for it would be stronger solid; a hollow traceried spire five hundred feet high is beautiful, for it is safer so, and the burden of the builder's toil spared. All wisdom, economy, beauty, and holiness are one; harmonious throughout—in all places, times, and things: understand any one of their orders, and do it; it will lead you to another—to all others, in time.

Now, therefore, think why this spire of Evreux is graceful. If it were only silver filigree over a salt-cellar, it would still be pretty (for it is beautifully varied and arranged). But not "graceful" (or full of grace). The reason is that it is built, not with silver, but with aspen logs; and because there has been brought a strange refinement and melody, as of chiming in tune, and virtue of uprightness, and precision of pointedness, into the aspen logs, which nobody could ever have believed it *was* in a log to receive. And it is graceful also, because it is evidently playful and bright in temper. There are no labouring logs visible—no propping, or thrusting, or bearing logs—no mass of enduring and

Digitized by Google

afflicted timber; only imaginative timber, aspiring just high enough for praise, not for ambition. Twice as high as it ever could have stood in a tree—by honour of men done to it; but not so high as to strain its strength, and make it weak among the winds, or perilous to the people.

10. Strasburg: The Cathedral Spire.

I have put this drawing—quite one of the noblest in all the series—out of its geographical place, and beside the Evreux, that you may compare the qualities of grace in wooden and stone buildings; and follow out our begun reasoning further.

Examine, first, how the height is told. Conscientiously, to begin with. He had not room enough on his paper (perhaps), and put the top at the side rather than blunt or diminish the least bit. I say "perhaps," because, with most people, that would have been the way of it; but my own private opinion is, that *he* never meant to have room on his paper for it—that he felt instinctively that it was grander to have it going up nobody knew where—only that he could not draw it so for the public, and must have the top handy to put on afterwards.

Conscientiously, first, the height is told; next, artfully. He chooses his place just where you can see the principal porch at the end of the street—takes care, by every artifice of perspective and a little exaggeration of aerial tone, to make you feel how far off it is; then carries it up into the clearer air. Of course, if you don't notice the distant porch, or are not in the habit of measuring the size of one part of a thing by another, you will not feel it here—but neither would you have felt it there, at Strasburg itself.

Next, for composition. If you ever read my last year's notes on Turner, you must remember how often I had to dwell on his way of conquering any objectionable character in his main subject by putting more of the same character

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

3 Proof Allen & Co Sc.

Strassburg

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

in something else, where it was *not* objectionable.[1] Now it happens to be one of the chief faults of Strasburg Spire (and it has many, for all the reputation of it), to be far too much constituted of meagre upright lines (see the angle staircases, and process of their receding at the top, and the vertical shafts across the window at its base). Prout instantly felt, as he drew the tower, that left to itself it would be too iron-like and stiff. He does not disguise this character in the least, but conquers it utterly by insisting with all his might on the flutings of the pilasters of the near well. "How ill drawn these!" you say. Yes; but he hates these, in themselves, and does not care how badly he draws them, so only that by their ugly help he can save the Cathedral. Which they completely do—taking all the stiffness out of it, and leaving it majestic. Next, he uses contrast to foil its beauty, as he has used repetition to mask its faults. In the "Abbeville," No. 4, he had a beautiful bit of rustic white wall to set off his towers with. Here, in Strasburg, half modernized, alas! even in his time, he finds nothing better than the great ugly white house behind the lamp. In old times, remember, a series of gables like that of the last house would have gone all down the street. (Compare the effect in "Strasburg," No. 11, all contemporary.) Prout will not do any "restoration"—he knows better; but he could easily have disguised this white house with cast shadows across the street, and some blinds and carpets at the windows. But the white, vulgar mass shall not be so hidden, and the richness of all the old work shall gain fulness out of the modern emptiness, and modesty out of the modern impudence.

Pre-eminently the gain is to the dear old gabled house on the right, which is the real subject of the drawing, being a true Strasburg dwelling-house of the great times.[2] But before speaking more of this I must ask you to look at the next subject.

[1] [See Vol. XIII. pp. 427, 530.]

[2] [For other notes on this drawing, see *Eagle's Nest*, § 86; and *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, Nos. 59 and 60.]

Digitized by Google

12. Old Street in Lisieux.

This, though it contains so much work, is a hurried and fatigued drawing—fatigued itself in a sense, as having more touches put on it than were good for it; and the sign of fatigue in the master, or perhaps rather of passing illness, for he seems never to have been tired in the ordinary way. The unusually confused and inarticulate figures, the more or less wriggled and ill-drawn draperies, and the unfinished foundation of the house on the right, where actually there is a line crossing another unintentionally! are all most singular with him; and I fancy he must have come on this subject at the end of a sickly-minded day, and yet felt that he must do all he could for it, and then broken down.

He has resolved to do it justice, at least in the drawing No. 13, one of the best in the room; but there are characters in the subject itself which, without his quite knowing why, cramped him, and kept several of his finer powers from coming into play.

Note, first, essentially he is a draughtsman of stone, not wood, and a tree-trunk is always wholly beyond his faculty; so that, when everything is wooden, as here, he has to translate his stony manner for it all through, and is as if speaking a foreign language. In the finished drawing, one scarcely knows whether the near doorway *is* stone or wood.

And there was one character, I repeat, in this subject that specially strained this weak part of him. When a wooden house is in properly wooden style, he can always do it, as at Abbeville and Strasburg. But this street at Lisieux is a wooden street in stone style. I feel even tempted to write fine scientific modern English about it, and say it is objectively lignologic and subjectively petrologic.[1] The crossing beams of the wall-courses, and kingposts of the gables in dormer windows, are indeed properly

[1] [For Ruskin's dislike of the words "objective" and "subjective," see Vol. V. p. 203 *n.*, Vol. VI. p. 482.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

E. Prout

Allen & Co. Sc.

Old Street in Lisieux

From the drawing in the possession of W. Pritchard Gordon Esq

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

expressive of timber structure; but all the sculpture is imitative of the forms developed in the stone traceries of the same period—seen perfectly in the elaborate drawing, No. 13.

Those traceries were themselves reciprocally corrupted, as we shall see presently, by the woodwork practised all round them; but both the Burgundian and Norman later Gothic were corrupted by their own luxurious laziness, before they took any infection from the forest. Instead of building a real pointed arch, they merely put a cross lintel with a nick in it* (*a*), then softened the nick-edges and ran a line of moulding round it (*b*), and then ran up a flourish above to show what a clever thing they had done (*c*),—and there you are. But there is much more curious interest in this form of wooden imitative architecture than any mere matter of structural propriety.

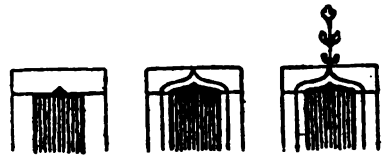


Fig. 2

Please compare the Lisieux houses in No. 12 with the house on the right at Strasburg in No. 10. You see there are no pinnacles nor crockets imitated there. All is sternly square—upright timber and cross timber—cut into what ornamental current mouldings the workman knew.

And yet you see the Cathedral at the side is eminently gabled and pinnacular! Run your eye from the square window of the second storey of the house (third from ground) along to the Cathedral gabled tracery. Could any two styles be more adverse? While, on the contrary, the Lisieux street is merely a "changing the willow wreaths to stone"[1]—in imitation of the chapel of St. Jacques [No. 8]? It is true,

* *Without* the nick, mind you, it would have been a grand building—pure Greek or pure Tuscan, and capable of boundless good. It is the Nicolaitane nick that's the devil.[2]

[1] [*The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto ii. st. 11.]

[2] ["But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate."—Rev. ii. 6.]

Digitized by Google

the Lisieux street is contemporary with St. Jacques, and the Strasburg house a century or so later than the Cathedral; but that is not the reason of the opposition. Had they been either pure French or pure German the two would have declined together and have died together. But in France of the fifteenth century, church, noblesse, and people were one body, and the people in Lisieux loved and delighted in their clergy and nobles, as the Venetians did,—

"Pontifices, clerus, populus, dux mente serenus."[1]

But Strasburg is on the edge—nay, on the Pole—of all divisions. Virtually, from west to east, between Dijon and Berne; virtually, from north to south, between Cologne and Basle: virtually, if you have eyes, the Diet of Worms is in it, the Council of Constance is in it, the Battle of Sempach is there, and the rout of Granson.[2]

That is a Swiss cottage, with all ecclesiastical and feudal powers flaming up into the sky at the side of it, and the iron lances and lines of them are as lace round the "Commerce de Jean Dichl."[3] "Commerce," a grand word, which we suppose ourselves here to understand; an entirely vile one, if misunderstood. Human commerce, a business for men and angels; but inhuman, for apes and spectres.[4] We must look at a few more street scenes in order to find out which sort Jean Dichl's belongs to.

14. Bayeux.

A small sketch, but first-rate, and with half a mile of street in it. Pure and plain woodwork this, with prop and

[1] [The inscription on a mosaic in St. Mark's: see *St. Mark's Rest*, § 113. A water-colour drawing of this mosaic is in the Ruskin Museum at Sheffield.]

[2] [The Council of Constance (1414–1418); because that gathering under the Emperor Sigismund was an assertion of the imperial power, and Strassburg was an imperial city. The Diet of Worms (1521), because the Reformation found ready acceptance at Strassburg. The battles of Sempach (1386) and Granson (1476), because Strassburg was in friendly relations with the Swiss confederates and in the latter struggle rendered them efficient aid.]

[3] [The inscription seen over the shop in the drawing described.]

[4] [Compare *Munera Pulveris*, ch. iv. ("Commerce").]

Digitized by Google

buttress of stumpy stone—healthy all, and sound. Note especially the strong look of foundation, as opposed to the modern style of house-front in most commercial quarters,—five storeys of brick wall standing on the edge of a pane of plate-glass.

15. Tours.

The saints presiding over an old-clothes shop, apparently; —but it may be the fashionable draper's of the quarter. I merely give it as an example of the developed form of bracket, the end of the cross timber becoming a niche, and the prop a saint—not without meaning. Much more strength than is really wanted allowed in the backing, so that these corrugated saints do not by their recessed niches really weaken the structure. Compare photograph No. 117.

16. Rouen: The Butter-Tower.[1]

Built with the octroi on butter—not a right way, be it spoken, in passing. All taxes on food of any sort, or drink of any sort, are wrong, whether to build a pious tower, or support an impious government.[2]

A tired sketch,—the house on the left, one of the most beautiful in France, hurried and ill done.

17. Rouen: Staircase in St. Maclou.

Almost unique in the elaboration of the texture in marble pillar, and effect of distant light, showing what he was capable of in this kind: compare "St. Jacques," No. 8, where he gets flickering sunlight through painted glass. There the effect is pathetic and expressive; but both texture and

[1] [See Vol. II. pp. 400, 432, for Ruskin's early sketches, in Prout's manner, of this tower.]

[2] [Ruskin was an advocate of direct as opposed to indirect taxation, and especially of graduated taxes on income and property. See Vol. XII. pp. 594–597, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 7.]

Digitized by Google

effect of light were mistakes in St. Maclou: it does not in the least matter to the staircase whether the pillar is smooth or the window bright. In earlier times he would have merely indicated the forms of both, and given his time to gather groups of figures following the circular sweep of the staircase.

18. GHENT.

Having run south now as far as I care, we will turn back, please, to go through the Netherlands into Germany. Pretty nearly *all* the Netherlands are in this and the following drawing. Boats beside houses; the boats heavily practical, the houses heavily fanciful, but both accurate and perfect in their way—work of a great, though fen-witted, people. The Ghent scene is the very cream of Prout—all that he could best do in his happiest times; his Cornish and Hastings boat-study standing him in thorough stead *here*, though it will fail him at Venice, as we shall sadly see.

19. ANTWERP.

Altogether magnificent: the noble street scene, requiring no effort to exalt, no artifice to conceal, a single feature in it. Pure fact—the stately houses, and the simple market, and the divine tower. You would like advertisements all along the house-fronts instead—wouldn't you? and notices of sale, at a ruinous sacrifice, in the shop-windows—wouldn't you? and a tramway up the street, and a railway under it, and a gasometer at the end of it, instead of a cathedral—now wouldn't you?

21. BRUNSWICK.

Dainty still; a most lovely drawing. I didn't find anything so good in the town myself, but was not there until 1859,[1] when, I suppose, all the best of it had been knocked

[1] [For a reference to the author's visit there, see *Ethics of the Dust*, § 90.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

S Frout Allen & Co Sc

Antwerp

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

down. The Stadthaus (see lithograph, No. 98) is unique in the support of its traceries on light transverse arches; but this innovation, like nearly all German specialities in Gothic, is grotesque, and affected without being ingenious.

22. DRESDEN.

An exquisite drawing, and most curious in the entire conquest and calming down of Prout's usual broken touch into Renaissance smoothness. It is the best existing representation of the old town, and readers of "Friedrich" may care to know what it was like.

23. PRAGUE: ENTRANCE OVER THE BRIDGE.

A drawing already noticed, of the highest quality. The lithograph, No. 91, of the other side of the tower on the right, enables us to walk back the other way; it is quite one of the best drawings in the book.

24. PRAGUE: THE STADTHAUS.

Both lovely, and essentially Proutesque, as a drawing. Architecturally, one of the prettiest possible examples of fourteenth-century Gothic. The town was all, more or less, like that once; the houses beyond have, I suppose, been built even since the siege.[1]

25. BAMBERG.

I include this drawing in our series, first for its lovely crowd of figures; and secondly, to show that Prout never attempts to make anything picturesque that naturally isn't. Domo d'Ossola and Bologna (47 and 65) are picturesque—in the drawings, because they are so in reality—and heavy Bamberg remains as dull as it pleases to be. This strict honesty of Prout's has never been rightly understood, because he didn't often draw dull things, and gleaned the

[1] [The siege by Frederick the Great in 1757.]

Digitized by Google

picturesque ones out of every hole and corner; so that everybody used to think it was he who had made them picturesque. But, as aforesaid, he is really as true as a mirror.[1]

26. NUREMBERG: THE FRAUEN KIRCHE.

Of the best time, and certainly the fullest expression ever given of the character of the church. But the composition puzzled him, the house-corner on the left coming in too abruptly, and the sketch falls short of his best qualities. He gets fatigued with the richness in excess over so large a mass, and feels that nothing of foreground will carry it out in harmony.

28. THE DRACHENFELS.

When I said that Turner and Prout stood by themselves in power of rendering magnitude,[2] I don't mean on the same level, of course, but in perfect sympathy; and Turner himself would have looked with more than admiration—with real respect—at this quiet little study. I have never seen any other picture or drawing which gave so intensely the main truths of the breadth and prolonged distances of the great river, and the scale and standing of the rock, as compared with the buildings, and woods at its feet.

The "standing" of the rock, I say especially; for it is in great part by the perfect sculpture and build of its buttresses (the "articulation" which, I have just said,[3] Fielding shunned as too troublesome) that the effect, or rather information, of magnitude is given.

And next to this rock drawing, the clear houses and trees, and exquisite little boat—examined well—complete the story of mountain power by their intense reality. Take the lens to them—there is no true enjoyment to be had without attention, either from pictures, or the truth itself.

[1] [See above, p. 397.]
[2] [See above, p. 399.]
[3] [See above, p. 400.]

Digitized by Google

29. Islands on the Rhine.

First, the power of the Dragon rock; then of the noble river. It seems to have been an especially interesting scene this, to good painters. One of the most elaborate pieces of drawing ever executed by Turner was from this spot.[1]

30. The Pfalz.[2]

Hurried a little, and too black in distance; but I include it in the series for a most interesting bit of composition in it. The building, from this point of view, had a disagreeable look of a church tower surrounded by pepper-boxes. He brings it into a mass, and makes a fortress of it, by the shadow on the mountain to the right of the tower, almost as dark as a bit of roof.

32. Worms.

An early drawing—the only one included in this series—is to be compared with the careful water-colour, No. 31.

33. See under No. 37.

35. Ulm.

A beautiful drawing of one of the most interesting street fountains in Germany. It is given in this sketch, as usual, with entire care and feeling of its proportion. The water-colour drawing, No. 36, shows the little interest he took in copying for the exhibition, knowing that the British mind was not to be impressed by proportion, and only cared for getting things into their frames. The lithograph, No. 90, is, on the contrary, one of his most careful works, and quite true to the place, when I saw it in 1835.[3] I suppose it is

[1] [For Turner's Rhine drawings, see Vol. XII. p. 377.]
[2] [On the Rhine, above Caub, on a ledge of rock in the middle of the river, stands the Pfalz or Pfalzgrafenstein, a small hexagonal building with turrets.]
[3] [For a sketch of Ulm, made by Ruskin in that year, see Plate 1 in Vol. I. (p. 8).]

Digitized by Google

all pulled down, and made an "esplanade" of by this time. (See passage from *Seven Lamps* in Appendix I.[1])

37 and 38. Swiss and German Costumes.

I never can understand how these groups are ever designed—or caught, and how they are built up, one by one. No painter who can do it ever tells us how.

39. Chillon.

The only drawing I ever saw which gave the real relation of the castle to the size of the mountains behind it.

40. The Dungeon of Chillon.

I must leave the reader now to make what he may of this, and the following drawings as far as 47. All of them, to people who know the old look of the places, will be interesting; but I have no time to enlarge on them.

41. Montreux.

42. Waterfall under the Dent du Midi, in the Rhone Valley.

43. Village of Martigny.

46. Brieg.

47. Domo d'Ossola.

One of the most exemplary in the room, for intense fidelity to the place, and lovely composition of living groups. Note the value of the upright figure in the balcony on the left, in breaking up and enriching the mass, and joining it with the rest.

[1] [For the reference see below, p. 448 n.]

Digitized by Google

time.

er de-
y one.

l rela-
it.

y of
hem,
in-

THE

use
ps.
he
it

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Domo d'Ossola

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

F. Prout

Allen & Co. Sc.

The Monument of Can Signorio della Scala: at Verona

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

48. Como.

Enough dwelt on in the preface, p. 398.

49. The Monument of Can Signorio della Scala: at Verona.[1]

Note that the low sarcophagus on the left, of much finer time than the richer tomb, has on its side a bas-relief representing the Madonna enthroned between two angels; a third angel presents to her the dead knight's soul, kneeling.

50. The large drawing of the subject, No. 50, has lost all these particulars. Was it all Prout's fault, shall we say? Was there any one, in his time, of English travellers, who would have thanked him for a Madonna and a dead old Scaliger, done ever so clearly?

56. Venice: Ducal Palace from the West.

57. Venice: Ducal Palace from the East.

58. St. Michael's Mount, Normandy.

I have put No. 58 in this eccentric manner, after the Ducal Palace, that the reader may feel, for good and all, Prout's intense appreciation of local character—his gaiety with the gay, and his strength with the strong. Cornish-bred, his own heart is indeed in the rocks, and towers, and sands of the fraternal Norman shore;[2] and it fails him in Venice, where the conditions alike of her masquing and her majesty were utterly strange to him. Still, the sense of light, and motion, and splendour above the Riva dei Schiavoni, and of gloom, and iron-fastness, and poverty,

[1] [With Prout's drawing, here reproduced, compare Ruskin's, Plate B in Vol. XI. (p. 90). Prout's of the Ducal Palace (see next page) may similarly be compared with Ruskin's in Vol. IV. (p. 306).]

[2] [See Vol. XII. pp. 308, 362.]

Digitized by Google

midst the silent sands of Avranches, are rendered by the mirror of him, as if you had but turned its face from sun to shade.

The St. Michael's is an entirely grand drawing. The St. Raphael's—for that is indeed the other name of the Ducal Palace*—on this side, has many faults; but is yet, out and out, the best Ducal Palace that has yet been done. It is not an architectural drawing—does not in the least pretend to be. No one had ever drawn the traceries of the Ducal Palace till I did it myself. Canaletti, in his way, is just as false as Prout; Turner no better.[1] Not one of them painted anything but their general impressions; and not a soul in England knew that there was a system in Venetian architecture at all, until I made the measured (to half and quarter inches) elevation of it (No. 105), and gave the analysis of its tracery mouldings and their development, from those of the Franciscans at the Frari (*Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. ch. vii.). This study of Prout's, then, I repeat, does not pretend to architectural accuracy; and it has even one very considerable fault. Prout's mind had been so formed among buildings solid at the base, and aerial at the top, that he not only could not enjoy, he could not even *see*, the national audacity of the great builder of the Ducal Palace, in supporting its wall on, virtually, two rows of marble piles;[2] and, at the farther end, just where the shafts at the angle let the winds blow through them as frankly

* The angel Michael is the angle statue on the south-west (seen in No. 56), with the inscription, "With my sword I guard the good, and cleanse the evil." The angel Raphael holds in his hands the nations' prayer to him: "Raphael, the dreadful ('reverende'), make thou the deep quiet, we beseech thee."[3]

---

[1] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. i. (Vol. III. pp. 255, 256), for the deficiencies of Canaletto and Prout in this matter; and for Turner's, Vol. XIII. pp. 159, 210, 499. The drawing by Ruskin here referred to is given as Plate 9 in Vol. IV. p. 306, and *cf.* p. 1. For his drawing of the Frari traceries, see Plate A in Vol. IX. p. xxiv.; and for his detailed work at Venice generally, see Vol. IX. pp. xxv.-xxvi., Vol. XI. p. xxii.]

[2] [See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. pp. 357–358), and Plate H in that volume.]

[3] [See further on these inscriptions, *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 364 and *n.*).]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Prout

Allen & Co Sc.

The Ducal Palace, Venice

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

as the timbers of Calais pier,* he blackens them all up inside, as if the backing wall were solid and the arches were only niches.

For all that, there never was anything so true to the general splendour and life of the Palace done before, nor ever will be again.†

And in the great drawing (No. 60), lent by Lord Coleridge, the upper storey is singularly and gracefully accurate in the pinnacled Gothic of its central window, and in the various elevations and magnitudes of the rest. The two upper windows in the shade at the nearest angle are the oldest portions of the Palace visible, and Prout has carefully noted their different curve. The bright and busy figures are true to old times only.

There are two points—technical both and spiritual both—which the reader must note in this drawing.

The first, how thankful Prout is for the clusters of doves along the upper line of the cornice. "They might as well be jackdaws," you think? Well, as aforesaid, Prout is not

* The real and marvellous structure of the angle is admirably shown in the photograph, No. 106*a*, though the quantity of light penetrating the shafts is a little exaggerated in effect by uniting with the light sides of the shafts. Taking the lens to the photograph, you will see this line is destroyed by the modern gas-lamp stuck across the Italian sculpture; and you may admire at leisure the other improvements made by the art of the nineteenth century on the effect of the piazzetta—the combination of the fore and mizzen masts of the huge steamer, whose hull, with its boat, blocks out the whole lagoon, and of the upright *near* gas-lamp, with the pillar of St. Mark; the introduction of the steamer's painted funnel to form a foundation for the tower of San Giorgio; the bathing establishment anchored beyond the pillars, just where the Bucentaur used to lie close to the quay to receive the Doge; and, finally, the bills pasted on the sheds at the base of St. Mark's column, advising us of improving works of a liberal tone, such as the "Storia della Natura" and the "Misteri della Inquisizione di Spagna." In this same Loggia of Sansovino's, against which these sheds are built, the "Misteri" of the Government Lottery are also revealed weekly to the popular mind.[1]

† For the building is now being restored, and no man with a heart will ever draw the patched skeleton of it more.

[1] [For another reference to the Lottery, see *St. Mark's Rest*, ch. ii.]

Digitized by Google

a colourist, else he would have made his boats black and his doves grey; but then he would have been Carpaccio, and not Prout. This is really all you can expect him to do for a dove, with his poor Cumberland plumbago;—and, after all, the glory of the creatures is not in being pigeons, but in being Venetians. Swallow or sparrow, daw or dove, sea-gull by Achilles' isle or chough by Cornish cliff—that they are living with us by shore and altar, under cottage eaves and around palace council-chambers, that is their glory—and, if we knew it, our peace.

The other point is more definitely technical, yet has its lesson in other directions also. I have already again and again insisted on Prout's way of taking up his stitches, and carrying one part of his work into another. Look back to what is said of the Como in the preface (p. 398). He is no more content with his Ducal Palace till he has got it well into fugue with its crowd, than he was with these old houses by the harbour. He won't break the corner of its arcade, but just flutes, as it were, a single pillar with the mast of a boat, and then carries the mast down—stopping the arch-mouldings for it, observe, as he draws them, so deliberate is he, and, getting well down so to his figures, rivets the rent of the canal across with the standing one, just under Michael Steno's central window,[1] and then carries all away to the right, with the sitting figures and levelled sails in harmony with the courses of the Palace, and, to the left, with the boats. Hide one of these foundational forms with your hand, and see how the Palace goes to pieces! There are many compositions in the room more felicitous; but there is no other in which the opposite influence to the "little rift within the lute"[2]—the stitch in time that saves nine—is so delicately and so intensely illustrated as by the service of this single boat-spar to every shaft of the whole Ducal Palace.

With respect to these Venice drawings, there are two

[1] [See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 346).]
[2] [Tennyson: *Vivien*.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

St. Mark's Place, Venice

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The St. Jean d'Acre Pillars, Venice
(1877)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

metaphysical problems—in my own mind, of extreme insolubility—and on which I therefore do not enlarge: namely, why Prout, practical among all manner of Cornish and Kentish boats, could not for the life of him draw a gondola; and the second, why, not being able to draw a gondola, he yet never gave the grand Adriatic fishing-boat, with its coloured sail, instead. These, and other relative questions still more abstruse—as, for instance, why he could draw the domes of Dresden rightly, and yet made the Madonna della Salute look like the National Gallery or Bethlehem Hospital—I must for the present leave for the reader's own debate, and only at speed give some account of the points to be illustrated by the supplementary drawings.

People often ask me—and people who have been long at Venice too—of the subject No. 55, *where* those square pillars are, and what they are.[1] The corner of the Piazzetta from which this view is taken was once the sweetest of all sacred niches in that great marble withdrawing-room of the Piazzetta of St. Mark's. My old sketch, No. 107, shows approximately the colour of the marble walls and pavement of it, and the way the white flowers of the Greek pillars—purest Byzantine—shone through the dark spots of lichen. The daguerreotype, No. 108, taken under my own direction, gives the light and shade of them, chosen just where the western sunlight catches the edge of the cross at the base of the nearer one; and my study, No. 108*a*, shows more fully the character of the Byzantine chiselling—entirely free-hand, flinging the marble acanthus-leaves here and there as they would actually grow. It is *through* work of this kind that the divine Greek power of the days of Hesiod came down to animate the mosaic workers in St. Mark's in the eleventh century.

They worked under a Greek princess, of whom the reader will find some legend (though yet I have not been able to do more than begin her story) in ch. vii. of *St. Mark's*

[1] [For these "St. Jean d'Acre Columns," see Vol. IX. p. 105 *n*.]

Digitized by Google

*Rest.** In ch. viii. I have given some account of the entire series of mosaics which were completed by her husband under the influence of his Greek queen (true *queen*, mind you, at that time, the Duke of Venice then wearing the king's diadem, not the republican cap); and I besought my readers at Venice and elsewhere to help me to get some faithful record of these mosaics before they perished by modern restoration.[1] I have never made a more earnest appeal for anything; and indeed I believe, had it been for a personal gift—another Splügen drawing,[2] or the like—I should have got it by this time easily enough. But there are always twenty people who will do what they feel to be kind, for one who will take my advice about an important public object. And—if they only knew it—the one real kindness they *can* show to me is in listening to me—understanding, in the first place, that I know my business better at sixty than I did at five-and-twenty; and in the second, that my happiness, such as yet remains to me, does not at all consist in the things about me in my own parlour, but in the thought that the principles I have taught are being acted upon, and the great buildings and great scenes I have tried to describe saved, so far as may yet be possible, from destruction and desecration. At this very hour the committees of Venetian builders are meeting to plot the total destruction, and re-erection according to their own notions, and for their own emolument, of the entire west front of

* My readers continually complain that they can't get my presently issuing books. There is not a bookseller in London, however, who is not perfectly well aware that the said books are always to be had by a postcard sent to my publisher, Mr. G. Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent, to whom subscriptions for the object stated in the text are to be sent (or the books may be had of the Fine Art Society).[3]

[1] [A note by Ruskin at § 132 of *St. Mark's Rest*. The circular referred to on the next page was distributed to visitors to the Old Water-Colour Society's Exhibition and to the Fine Art Society's Gallery. It was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, i. 237–251, and is included in a later volume of this edition.]

[2] [See Vol. XIII. p. 487.]

[3] [Particulars of Ruskin's methods of publication at this time are given in a later volume of this edition. Mr. Allen opened an office in London in January 1890; Ruskin's books are now sold in the ordinary way.]

Digitized by Google

St. Mark's—that which Barbarossa knelt under, and before which Dandolo took his vow for Palestine![1] And in the meantime the Christian populace of all Europe is quarrelling about their little parish reredoses and wax candles!*

And so it comes to pass that the floor of St. Mark's is already destroyed, together with the north and south sides; only the west front and roof mosaics are yet left, and these are instantly threatened. I have got an absolutely faithful and able artist, trained by Mr. Burne-Jones, to undertake the copying of the whole series of mosaics yet uninjured.[2] He is doing this for love and mere journeyman's wages—how carefully and thoroughly, the three examples in this room (114, 115, 116) will enough show; but he has been six months at work alone, unable to employ assistants, and all that I have yet got for him by the eagerest appeals I could make at Venice and here is—some hundred and thirty pounds, and half of that from a single personal friend.†

I will have a little circular drawn up, stating these and other relative facts clearly, before the close of the present exhibition. Before its opening, I can allow myself now little more than the mere explanation of what it contains.

And now I really haven't time to talk any more, and yet I've ever so much to say, if I could, of the following drawings at Arqua and Nuremberg, 67 and 70. I must at least say at once why these, like Venice and St. Michael's Mount, go side by side.

* It may perhaps not be quite too late to contradict a report that appeared in some Irish paper, that I had been lately in Dublin, giving some opinion or other about reredoses. I have not been in Ireland these ten years—never shall be in Ireland more[3]—and care no more about any modern churches or church furniture than about the drop-scene at Drury Lane—not so much indeed, if the truth were all told.

† £128, 15s. 6d., by report from Mr. Allen, of 12th November.

---

[1] [See Vol. IX. p. 28 *n.*]

[2] [Mr. T. M. Rooke. Several of the drawings thus made for Ruskin are exhibited at the St. George's Museum at Sheffield: see a later volume of this edition.]

[3] [He had visited Ireland in 1868, when he gave the lecture on "The Mystery of Life and its Arts," afterwards added to *Sesame and Lilies*.]

Digitized by Google

In the first place, I believe that the so-called Petrarch's house at Arqua (67)[1] can only be built on the site of the real one—it can't be of Petrarch's time; but the tomb is true: and just looking from that to the building of Dürer's house (70)—which is assuredly authentic—and of Rubens's, No. 81, what a quantity of the lives of the men we are told by these three slight sketches! One of the things I hope to do at Sheffield is to get a connected and systematic series of drawings of the houses and the tombs of great men.[2] The tombs, of course, generally tell more of their successors than of themselves; but the two together will be historical more than many volumes. Their houses, I say; yes, and the things they saw from their houses—quite the chief point with many of the best men and women. Casa Guidi windows,[3] often of much more import than Casa Guidi; and in this house of Albert, its own cross-timbers are little matter, but those Nuremberg walls around it are everything.

73. Kelso.

I now gather together as I best may the supplementary drawings which have come in since I arranged my series, and one or two others which did not properly belong to it. This one of Kelso is chiefly valuable as showing his mode of elementary study with washes of two tints—one warm, the other a little cooler. The system was afterwards expanded into his colour practice.

74. Entrance to North Transept of Rouen.

Unfinished, and extremely interesting, as showing his *method* of rubbing in the tint with the stump or his finger before adding the pencil lines.

[1] [See Ruskin's sketch of this house in *The Poetry of Architecture* (Vol. I. p. 108 and *n.*).]

[2] [This scheme, however, was not carried out.]

[3] [Ruskin was a great admirer of Mrs. Browning's poem. See *Stones of Venice*, vol. ii. (Vol. X. p. 243 *n.*), and compare p. 33, above.]

Digitized by Google

75. Study of Dutch Boats.

These boat sketches might be multiplied countlessly; and I would fain have given many and talked much of them, but have neither room nor time. Note in this the careful warping of the mast by the strain of the heavy sail.

76. Neudersdorf.
77. Gutenfels.

Two lovely Rhine realities, when the river was something better than a steam-tramway.

78. An old Rhine Bridge at Rheinfelden.

A favourite Turner subject, and drawn and engraved with great care in *Modern Painters*.[1] As a Prout, it is inferior—small in manner and forced; but, as usual, wholly true to the place.

79. Munich.

Notable chiefly for the effort made to draw the attention away from the ugly arcade under the houses by the crowd of near figures. Compare the insistence on beautiful arcades in the Como and Domo d'Ossola.

80. Yprès.

Wholly lovely, and to be classed with the Abbeville and Evreux as one of the most precious records of former domestic architecture.

81. Rubens's House, Antwerp.

The kind of domestic architecture that destroyed all reverence for what preceded it, and brought us down to—what we are.

[1] [See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. xi. § 30 n., and Plates 82, 83; and compare Nos. 86–89 in the National Gallery drawings, Vol. XIII. p. 222.]

Digitized by Google

Note the beginning of modern anatomies and sciences and pseudo-classicalisms in the monstrous skulls of beasts.

82. CAEN.
83. FALAISE.

Two of the most careful and finished pieces of his later work, but rather architectural studies than pictures; and, alas! the architecture of the worst school. So little can the taste be really formed without study of sculpture as the queen of edifying law. See notes on Supplementary Sketches.[1]

86. PORTICO DI OTTAVIA, ROME.

All the life and death of Rome is in this quite invaluable drawing; but I have no time to talk of the life and death of Rome, and perhaps the enlightened modern student would only care for a view of the new tobacco manufactory under the Palatine.

87. WELL AT STRASBURG.

We don't want wells neither, in these days of wisdom, having Thirlmere turned on for us, or Loch Katrine, at our pleasure.[2] But—from the days of Jacob's well till—thirty years ago, such things were pleasant in human eyes.

88. WELL AT STRASBURG.

I close our Prout pencilling with seven examples of his superb work on stone; all by his own hand, and as literally and thoroughly his, touch for touch, as the pencil sketches themselves, and even more wonderful in their easy mastery of the more difficult material.

[1] [Below, p. 436; and on the relations of sculpture and architecture, see Vol. VIII. p. 174, Vol. XII. p. 84 *n.*, and General Index.]

[2] [On the Thirlmere waterworks, 1879 (for Manchester), see Vol. XIII. p. 517; the aqueduct from Loch Katrine (for Glasgow) is of older date, the works having been partially opened by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1859.]

Digitized by Google

What a disgrace it is to modern landscape-painters that this book of Prout's "Sketches in Flanders and Germany"[1] should remain, to this day, the *only work* of true artistic value produced, that is to say, by the artist's own hand, purchasable by the public of Europe, in illustration of their national architecture!

89. Well at Nuremberg.

This study is one of the most beautiful, but also one of the most imaginative, that ever Prout made—highly exceptional and curious.

The speciality of Nuremberg is that its walls are of stone, but its windows—especially those in the roof, for craning up merchandise—are of wood. All the projecting windows and all the dormers in this square are of wood. But Prout could not stand the inconsistency, and deliberately petrifies all the wood. Very naughty of him! I have nothing to say in extenuation of this offence; and, alas! secondly, the houses have, in reality, only three stories, and he has put a fourth on, out of his inner consciousness!

I never knew him do such a thing before or since; but the end of it is that this drawing of Nuremberg is immensely more Nurembergy than the town itself, and a quite glorious piece of mediæval character.

90. Ulm.

91. Prague: Tower of the Gate.

92. Prague: Stadthaus.—The realization of sketch No. 24.

93. Brunswick: Rathhaus.

[1] [For references to this book, which first incited Ruskin's parents to foreign travel, see Vol. I. p. xxix., Vol. III. p. 217.]

Digitized by Google

94. Coblenz.

I have always held this lithograph to show all Prout's qualities in supreme perfection, and proudly finish our series of pencil and chalk work with it.

We now come to a large series of early colour studies, promising better things than ever came of them; and then the examples of Prout for which we are simply to blame the public taste he had to meet, and not him. There were no Pre-Raphaelites in those days. On the walls at the Scala Palace, in that sketch of Verona, No. 49, Prout has written, conscientiously, "brick": but do you think, if he had painted it of brick, anybody would have bought the drawing? Since those days, all the work of Walker, of Boyce, of Alfred Hunt, of Albert Goodwin, of John Brett[1] (the whole school of them, mind you, founded first on the strong Pre-Raphaelite veracities which were all but shrieked down at the first seeing of them, and which I had to stand up alone for, against a whole national clamour of critical vituperation),[2] all that affectionate and laborious painting from nature has familiarized you, now, with birds, and ivy, and blossoms, and berries, and mosses, and rushes, and ripples, and trickles, and wrinkles, and twinkles; and, of course, poor old Prout's conventional blue wash won't look its best afterwards. Be thankful to *them* (and somewhat also—I say it not in pride, but as a part of the facts—to *Modern Painters* and me) and indulgent to the old workman, who did the best he could for his customers, and the most he could for his money.

95. The English Cottage.—See Preface, p. 385.

[1] [See above, for Walker, pp. 339–348; for Boyce, p. 162; for A. Hunt, p. 50; for Brett, p. 153. For Mr. Albert Goodwin, see (in a later volume) Ruskin's Notes on "a Series of Drawings made for St. George's Guild": they were exhibited in 1886 at the Fine Art Society in conjunction with a collection of drawings by Mr. Goodwin.]

[2] [See Vol. XII. pp. xliii.–xlix., for the history of Ruskin's defence of the Pre-Raphaelites.]

Digitized by Google

96. LAUNCESTON.

Had this drawing been brought to me as an early Turner, I should have looked twice, and thrice, at it before saying no. If Prout had only had just ever so little more pride, and some interest in British history, he would have been a painter, indeed, and no mean pencil draughtsman. But he just missed it—and a miss is as bad as a mile, or a million of miles; and I say nothing more of the series of water-colours here, except only that many a good lesson may be learned from them in chiaroscuro, and in flat tinting, by modest students.

SUPPLEMENTARY DRAWINGS

There are—or ought to be, if I get them together in time—eleven of my own, namely:—

104. CALAIS.[1]

104*a*. THE AVENTINE.

105. DUCAL PALACE AND BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

106. DUCAL PALACE: FOLIAGE OF SOUTH-WEST ANGLE.

107. PILLARS OF THE PIAZZETTA.[2]

108. PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PILLARS OF THE PIAZZETTA.

108*a*. CHIAROSCURO STUDY OF THE SAME PILLARS.

[1] [See above, p. 408 (where Ruskin's drawing is reproduced); and for the Aventine, p. 406; for the Ducal Palace, p. 424. No. 106 has been given as Plate H in Vol. X. (p. 358). No. 107 is here given (Plate 4).]

[2] [The "Pillars of the Piazzetta" here referred to are not the tall columns usually so called, but the "St. Jean d'Acre Pillars": see above, p. 427 *n*. For notes on Ruskin's drawing of them see the circular already referred to (p. 428); reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, i. 246, and in a later volume of this edition.]

Digitized by Google

109. THE CASA D'ORO. (*On the south wall.*)[1]

110. WINDOW ON THE GRAND CANAL.

111. ABBEVILLE CROCKET.

112. OAK-LEAF.[2]

113. MOSS AND OXALIS.

I meant, when first this exhibition was planned, to have made it completely illustrative of the French flamboyant architecture, which Prout had chiefly studied. But I have been too much interrupted by other duties;[3] and I can only now point out, once more—after thirty years of reiterating this vital fact to architects in vain—that until they are themselves absolute masters of sculptural surface, founded on natural forms, they do not know the meaning of any good work in any school.

Sculptural *surface*, observe.[4] They fancy they have drawn an ornament when they have got its outline: but in sculpture the *surface* is everything; the outline follows, and is compelled by it. Thus, in the piece of Ducal Palace sculpture, No. 106, the entire value of it depends on the chiaroscuro of its surfaces; and it would be as absurd to think of sketching it without shade as a piece of rippled lagoon. And in every minutest finial and crocket of that French flamboyant, the surfaces are studied to a perfection, not less subtle, though relieved by more violent shade. The fast study, No. 111, shows the action of the curved stems and flow of surfaces in one of the crockets of Abbeville. The photograph, No. 117,[5] and the study of oak-leaves, No. 112, will

[1] [For Ruskin's experiences when he was drawing this house, see Vol. III. p. 214 *n.*]

[2] [See the Plate opposite.]

[3] [As, for instance, in the work connected with the threatened restoration of St. Mark's.]

[4] [See above, p. 360.]

[5] [Previous editions, and the reprint in *Ruskin on Pictures*, read "See photograph, No. 6, and . . ."; but no such photograph is elsewhere mentioned, while the account of the photograph No. 117 at p. 388 makes the text clearly applicable to that.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

J. Ruskin — Allen & Co. Sc.

Study of Oak Leaves
(1879)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

show how the natural forms of vegetation lend themselves to every need of such attentive design. I have painted this bit of leafage in two stages, showing—if any one cares to know it—the way Hunt used his body-colour; laying it first with extreme care in form and gradation, but in pure white, and then glazing over it—never disturbing it, or mixing it in the slightest degree with his clear colour. And it is only by this management of opaque colour that architectural detail can be drawn at speed with any useful result. See the bit of honeysuckle ornament, for instance (you must take the lens both to the oak-leaf drawing and this), at the top of the pillar in No. 108, and fancy the time it would have taken to express the bossy roundness of it in any other way. All disputes about the use of body-colour begin and end in the "to be or not to be" of accurate form.

Then there are three drawings of St. Mark's mosaics by Mr. Rooke:[1]—

114. Floral Decoration.

115. Madonna and David.

116. The Prophets.

Then some variously illustrative photographs, etc., namely:—

117. Abbeville.[2]

118. Picture of Abbeville.

106*a*. Venice, the Piazzetta.

11. Lithograph of Modern Strasburg. (*On the east wall.*)

[1] [Mr. Rooke's drawings are now in the Ruskin Museum at Sheffield.]
[2] [See above, p. 388.]

Digitized by Google

119 (?) IMPROVEMENTS IN MODERN LONDON.

Then in the glass case there is a little bit of real Venetian sixteenth-century silk-work—put there to show precisely what Shakespeare meant by "Valance of Venice gold in needlework" (*Taming of the Shrew*); and secondly, to show the use of minute points of colour in decoration carried on thus far from the Byzantine schools.

And, finally, there is the Meissonier, above referred to (p. 381), "Napoleon in 1814," on the Chaussée of Vitry, just after the battle of Arcìs-sur-Aube:[1]—

"The French horsemen, though inferior to none in the world for audacity and prowess, were overmatched by their opponents, and driven back to the bridge of Arcìs. Napoleon, who was on the other side, instantly rode forward to the entrance of the bridge, already all but choked up with fugitives, and drawing his sword, exclaimed, 'Let me see which of you will pass before me!' These words arrested the flight, and the division Friant, traversing the streets of Arcìs in double-quick time, passed the bridge, formed on either side of its other extremity, and by their heavy fire drove back the allied horse.

. . . . . .

"Napoleon was repeatedly in imminent danger; nearly all his staff were killed or wounded. 'Fear nothing,' said he to the generals who urged him to retire: 'the bullet is not yet cast which is to kill me.' He seemed to court rather than fear death; his air was resolute but sombre; and as long as the battle raged, by the light of the burning houses behind and the flash of the enemies' guns in front, he continued to face the hostile batteries.

. . . . . .

"On leaving Arcìs, instead of taking the road to Chalons or to Paris, he moved on the chaussée of Vitry, direct towards the Rhine. His letter to the Empress Marie Louise was in these terms:—

"'My love, I have been for some days constantly on horseback. On the 20th I took Arcìs-sur-Aube. The enemy attacked me there at eight

[1] [Ruskin's "1814," the smaller of two versions, was bought by him for a thousand guineas. It used to hang over the fireplace in the "turret-room" at Brantwood. Ruskin did not keep it for "St. George's Schools," but sold it in 1882 for 5900 guineas. The larger version was sold in 1890 to M. Chaucard of the Magasins du Louvre for £32,000—a sum far in excess of anything given for the work of a living painter. Ruskin included his "1814" in a collection shown at the Royal Institution in 1869 in illustration of his lecture on "The Relations of Flamboyant Architecture to Contemporary and Subsequent Art." For his note in the catalogue, see a later volume of this edition; and for other references to Meissonier, see Ruskin's first letter on the Oxford Museum (Vol. XVI.) and *Letters to Ward*, ii. 12 (privately printed, 1893, and included in a later volume of this edition).]

Digitized by Google

in the evening. I beat him the same evening. I took two guns and retook two. The next day the enemy's army put itself in array to protect the march of its columns on Bar-sur-Aube, and I resolved to approach the Marne and its environs. This evening I shall be at St. Dizier. Farewell, my love. Embrace my son.'" (See *Alison*, vol. x. pp. 396–406.)

It would be difficult to find a more perfect example of the French realistic school than this picture. It is, of course, conventional, and founded on photographic effect. The white horse in reality would have looked like a ghost in the twilight, and not one of the details of the housings been in the least visible: had these been so, much more should the details of the landscape have been. But in its kind it is without rivalship, and I purpose that it shall remain in St. George's schools—for a monument of War-sorrow, where War has been unjust.

Digitized by Google

II.—HUNT

142. The Butterfly.

Before saying anything more of the Hunt series, I want my readers once more clearly to understand what I have brought it here for—namely, to show them what real painting is, as such, wholly without inquiry concerning its sentiment or story. The Prouts are here for an exactly opposite reason—not at all to show you what mere pencilling is, as such, but what it can pencil for us of European scenery and history. Whereas this butterfly is here, not at all to teach you anything you didn't know about butterflies; nor the peach and grapes to teach you anything you didn't know about those familiar fruits; nor even that boy in his father's boots to teach you anything you didn't know before about boys and boots.[1] They are here merely to show you what is meant by painting, as distinguished from daubing, from plastering, from rough casting, from chromo-tinting, from tray-varnishing, from paper-staining, and in general from the sort of things that people in general do when you put a brush into their hands and a pot within reach of them.

Now that little brown-red butterfly (which Mr. Gurney is so fortunate in possessing) is a piece of real painting; and it is as good as Titian or anybody else ever did. And if you can enjoy it, you can enjoy Titian and all other good painters; and if you can't see anything in *it*, you can't see anything in *them*, and it is all affectation and pretence to say that you care about them.

And with this butterfly in the drawing I put first, please

[1] [No. 173. "My Father's Boots."]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

From a photograph Allen & Co Sc

William Hunt

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

look at the mug and loaf in the one I have put last, of the Hunt series, No. 171. The whole art of painting is in that mug—as the fisherman's genius was in the bottle. If you can feel how beautiful it is, how ethereal, how heathery and heavenly, as well as to the uttermost muggy, you have an eye for colour, and can enjoy heather, heaven, and everything else below and above. If not, you must enjoy what you can, contentedly, but it won't be painting; and in mugs, it will be more the beer than the crockery—and on the moors, rather grouse than heather.

Going back to No. 142, you will perhaps ask me why the poppy is so poor and the butterfly so rich? Mainly because the poppy withered, and the butterfly was pinned and permanent. But there are other reasons, of which more presently.[1]

144. Herring and Pilchard.

Supreme painting again, and done with his best pains; for these two subjects, and

146. Dead Chicken,

were done by the old man, in all kindness and care, at my own request, for me to give as types of work to country schools of art.[2] Yet no kindness or care could altogether enable him to work rightly under the direction of another mind; and the project was ultimately given up by me, the chicken, finished as it is, having been one of my chief disappointments. And here anent, let me enter into some

[1] [See below, p. 443.]

[2] [Compare *Two Paths*, § 69. Six of the drawings thus done for Ruskin were exhibited in the gallery of the Old Water-Colour Society between the years 1856 and 1861. "Some of these—in particular, one of 'Mushrooms: Study of Rose-Grey' (1860)—were exquisite. But the generous donor ultimately gave up the project. The old man used to pause in the task, which he was trying his very best to accomplish, and cry out, 'How difficult it is to paint this oyster-shell!' After painting some 'Pilchards: Study of Gold' in 1860, one of the most striking of the series, he wrote, however, 'If you want studies of colour, fish is the sort of thing to look at'" (Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, ii. 196).]

Digitized by Google

general account of the tenor of his drawings. They may be broadly divided into the following classes, into one or other of which every work of importance from his hand will distinctly fall.

Class 1

Drawings illustrative of rural life in its vivacity and purity, without the slightest endeavour at idealization, and still less with any wish either to caricature or deplore its imperfections. All the drawings belonging to this class are virtually faultless, and most of them very beautiful. It is, I am glad to say, thoroughly represented in this room, which contains several examples of the highest quality—namely, 121, 168, 171, 172, 173, 175; besides two pieces of still life (169, and the interior, No. 174), properly belonging to the group.

Class 2

Country life, with endeavour to add interest to it by passing sentiment. The drawings belonging to this class are almost always over-finished, and liable to many faults. There are three in this collection—120, 165, 166.

Class 3

Country life, with some expression of its degradation, either by gluttony, cowardice, or rudeness. The drawings of this class are usually very clever, and apt to be very popular; but they are, on the whole, dishonourable to the artist. There are five examples here—namely, 157, 158, 161, 163, 164.

Class 4

Flower pieces. Fruit is often included in these; but they form a quite separate class, being necessarily less finished drawings—the flowers sooner changing their form. Including the fungi among these, there are eight fine ones in the room—148, 150, 149, 152, 147, 151, 154, 156.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Eavesdropper

From a drawing in the possession of E F Collier Esq

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Class 5

Fruit pieces, on which a great part of the artist's reputation very securely rests. Five first-rate ones are here, and several of interesting, though inferior, quality.

Class 6

Dead animals. Alas! if he could but have painted living ones, instead of those perpetual bunches of grapes.[1] But it could not be. To a weakly, sensitive, nervous temperament, the perpetual changes of position, and perpetual suggestion of new beauty in an animal, are entirely ruinous: in ten minutes they put one in a fever. Only the very greatest portrait-painters — Sir Joshua and Velasquez[2] — can draw animals rightly.

I begin with this last class, and reascend to the highest.

138. Dead Hare and Game.

A most notable drawing of early practice, quite wonderful in textures of fur and in work of shadows, but tentative, and in many points failing.

141. Dead Dove. (A.)

A pure water-colour drawing, before his style was perfectly formed. Full of interest, but too conventional and slight in background.

139. Dead Dove. (B.)

Finished work of central time.

145. Dead Dove. (C.)

Replica, I suppose, of B, with completer background, and of highest quality. I must be pardoned for saying

[1] [Compare the critique in *Academy Notes*, above, p. 80.]
[2] [Compare, for Reynolds, *Eagle's Nest*, § 152; for Velasquez, *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pt. ix. ch. vi. §§ 13, 19.]

Digitized by Google

so of my own drawing; but of course, after long and affectionate relations with the painter, it would be strange if I had not some of his best works.[1]

148. Pine Melon, and Grapes.

We were obliged to put this drawing low down, for, in spite of its dark background, it killed everything we put near it. To my mind it is the most majestic piece of work in the room. The grapes are the vintage of Rubens, and the shadows are the darkness of Tintoret. It is wholly free from any pettiness of manner, and in force, spring, and succulence of foliage it is as if the strength of nature were in it, rather than of human hand. I never saw it until now, and have learned from it more than, after my fifty years of labour, I thought anything but a Venetian picture could have taught me.

132. "Love what you Study, Study what you Love."

All *Modern Painters* in a nutshell of a sentence, and the painted nutshell perfect. (See Preface, p. 374 *n.*)

130. Grapes.

Consummate. Can't be better anywhere.

131. Mr. Sibeth's Quinces.

All that's best in this kind.

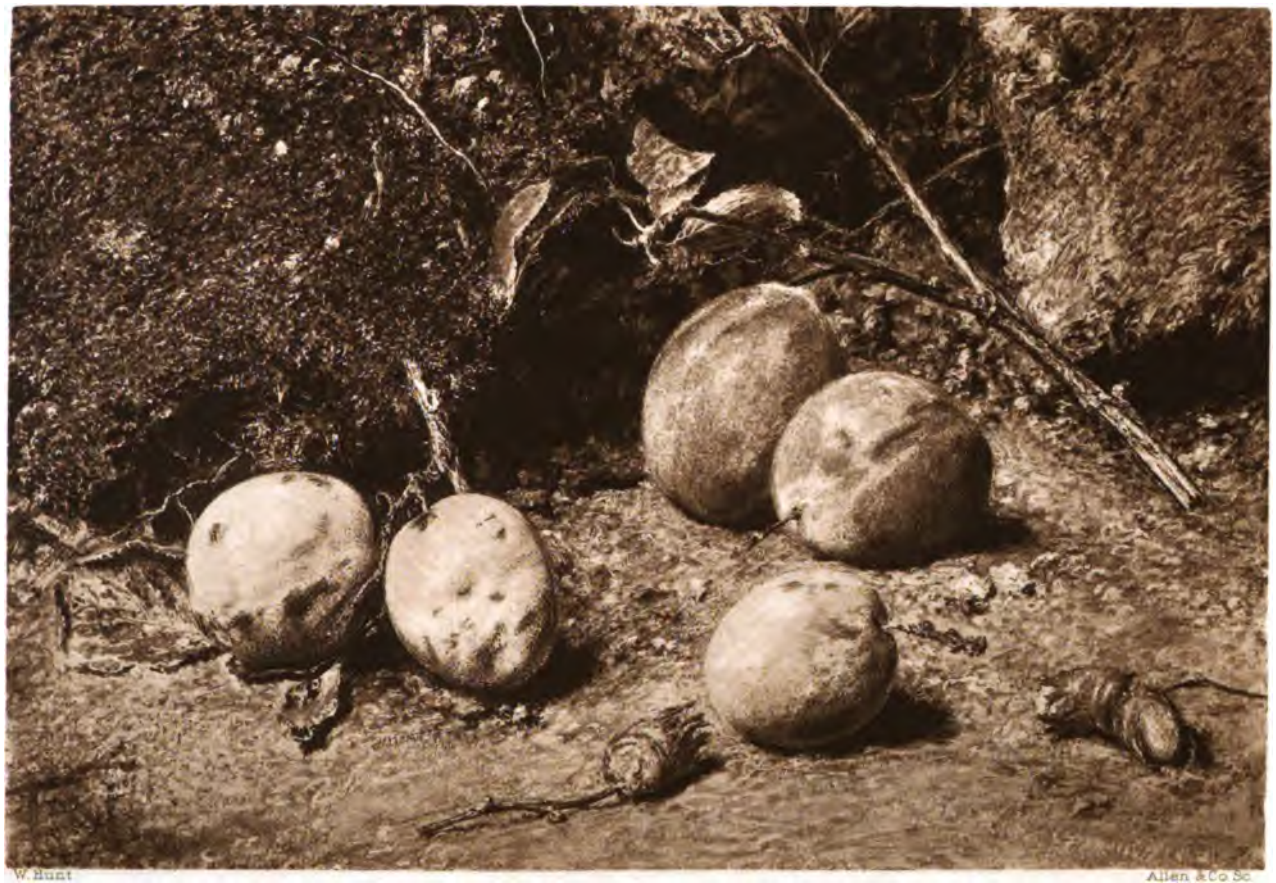
[1] [Bought by Ruskin's father. "I got a piece of advice from Hunt," he wrote to his son in 1852, "never to commission a picture. He could not have done my pigeon so well had he felt he was doing it for anybody" (Collingwood's *Life of Ruskin*, p. 137). Ruskin, on hearing of the purchase, wrote from Venice:—

> "10*th Jan.* [1852].—I forgot—my head being full of Turner and Tintoret yesterday—to thank you for your kindness both to Hunt and me in buying the ringdove—no subject could possibly be better fitted to show his powers. I would—if I had given him a commission, which he says I ought not—have commissioned him just for that. You must come some day to visit Mr. Fawkes with me, and see Turner's ringdove—a rainbow made of down; but I doubt not Hunt's will be *very nearly* equal to it."

For another reference to Turner's ringdove at Farnley, see *Notes on Turner Sketches*, No. 59, Vol. XIII. pp. 274, 370.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Plums

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

125. Bullaces.

Very fine, but conventional in background.

129. Grapes.

Perfect work, but wasted. Why he did so many grapes, and scarcely ever sloes, or finely russet apples, or *growing* strawberries, always mystified me.

126. Plums.

Finest work, but a little dull. My own favourites of his plums were such variegated ones as 133 and 135; but I somehow never got any. This drawing, however, was the one of which Hunt said to me innocently—seeing it again after some ten years—"It's very nice, isn't it?"[1]

128. Plums.

The bit of oak-leaf here is very wonderful and interesting as an example, and what Hunt meant by saying to me once, "I like to see things 'fudged' out."[2] It is to be remembered, however, that this was his own special liking; and it must not be followed by the general student. The finest forms of anything cannot be "fudged" out, but must be drawn, if possible, with the first line, at least with the last one, for ever.

149. Dr. Drage's Fungi.[3]

A perfect gem; "Venetian red" in its best earthly splendour: it could only be more bright in clouds.

[1] [For a fuller record of this conversation, see *The Cestus of Aglaia*, § 3.]

[2] [For another note on this remark by Hunt, and on his characteristics generally, see *Catalogue of the Educational Series*, Nos. 212, 213. Hunt was fond of using the phrase, "fudging it out," to describe a painter's processes. "He has fudged it out," he said of a brother artist; "we must all fudge it out. There is no other way than fudging it out." See Roget's *History of the Old Water-Colour Society*, i. 469.]

[3] [See also *Academy Notes* for 1858, pp. 200, 203, 205 of this volume.]

Digitized by Google

147. Mr. Fry's Hawthorn.

A little overworked, but very glorious. Soft and scented, I think, if you only wait a little, and make-believe very much.

155. (Mine.) Hawthorn and Birds' Nests.

The hawthorn this time a little *under*worked, but very good; and nests as good as can be.

148. Lilac. (Mr. Sibeth's.)

Fine, but curiously redundant. The upper branch by itself, or the lower with only the laburnum, or both together without the third, would have been beautiful; but two's company, and three's none.

150. Vase with Rose and Basket with Fruit.
151. Flowers and Fruit.

Two resplendent ones; everything that he could do best in this kind—absolutely right in colour, absolutely in light and shade, and without any rivalship in past or present art.

162. The Gamekeeper.[1]

Early study. Please observe that Hunt learned his business, not in spots but in lines. Compare the entirely magnificent sketch of the riverside, No. 124, which is as powerful in lines as Rembrandt, and the St. Martin's Church, No. 128, which is like a bit of Hogarth.

157. The Invalid.

Full of humour; but there is no place for humour in true painting. See also No. 164, "The Young Artist," and

[1] [Reproduced at p. 180 of Mr. Harry Quilter's *Preferences in Art*.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Birds' Nests & May Blossom

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

"The Wasp," No. 163. If I could have the currant-pie without the boy, I should be content.

161. GIPSIES.

Very powerful; historic in its kind.[1]

166. PRAYING BOY.[2] (MR. QUILTER'S.)

Over-finished, as its companion, No. 165, an endeavour at doing what he did not understand. So also the large study of himself, No. 176, with the "Mulatto," No. 122, and "Wanderer," No. 120. His mode of work was entirely unfitted for full life-size.

121. MR. QUILTER'S STABLE-BOY.[3]

172. MR. ORROCK'S SHY SITTER,[4] AND THE BLESSING (171).[5]

On the contrary, he is here again in his utmost strength —and in qualities of essential painting—unconquerable. In the pure faculty of the painter's art—in what Correggio, and Tintoret, and Velasquez, and Rubens, and Rembrandt, meant by *painting*—that single bunch of old horse-collars[6] is worth all Meissonier's horse-bridles, boots, breeches, epaulettes and stars, together.

The other drawings of the highest class need no commentary. There is not much in the two little candle-lights, Nos. 168, 175, but all that is, of the finest; and the three

[1] [Reproduced at p. 184 of Mr. Harry Quilter's *Preferences in Art.*]

[2] [Otherwise called "Devotion." See p. 79.]

[3] [Generally known as "The Eavesdropper." Reproduced at p. 177 of Mr. Harry Quilter's *Preferences in Art.* Mr. Quilter says: "I remember Sir Frederick Burton saying many years ago to my father—perhaps in a fit of generous enthusiasm—that this is the finest water-colour in the world" (p. 182).]

[4] [No. 172 is reproduced as frontispiece in the illustrated (1880) edition of the *Notes.*]

[5] ["This has been reproduced in etching by Mr. Waltner."—*Note to Illustrated Edition.*]

[6] [*i.e.*, in the "Stable-boy." For the reference to Meissonier, see above, pp. 381, 438.]

Digitized by Google

drawings with which I close our series, "The Shy Sitter," No. 172, "The Fisherman's Boy," No. 173, and "The Blessing," No. 171, things that the old painter was himself unspeakably blessed in having power to do. The strength of all lovely human life is in them; and England herself lives only, at this hour, in so much as, from all that is sunk in the luxury, sick in the penury, and polluted in the sin of her great cities, Heaven has yet hidden for her old men and children such as these, by their fifties, in her fields and on her shores, and fed them with Bread and Water.[1]

[1] [In the original editions an Appendix followed, in four sections, containing reprints of passages from Ruskin's works (see above, p. 369). These were as follows :—

Appendix i.—*The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, ch. vi. § 10 ("Every human action gains . . . " to the end), in this edition, Vol. VIII. pp. 233–234; and ch. vi. §§ 16, 17, ("But so far as it can be rendered . . . " to the end of § 17), in this edition, *ibid.*, pp. 241–242.

Appendix ii.—*Modern Painters*, vol. iv. ch. i. §§ 1–3 ("The essence of picturesque character . . . " to the end of § 3), in this edition Vol. VI. pp. 10–12.

Appendix iii.—*Modern Painters*, vol. iv. ch. i. § 13 ("And, in some sort, the hunter of the picturesque . . . " to the end of § 13), in this edition, Vol. VI. pp. 21–22.

Appendix iv.—*Eagle's Nest*, §§ 82 ("I do not doubt . . . " to the end of the section), 86, 87.]

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

The Blessing

From the drawing in the possession of James Orrock, Esq

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

COMPLETE INDEX OF DRAWINGS[1]

PROUT LIST

		Contributed by
1	Calais Town, see pp. 402, 405, 408 .	Mr. S. G. Prout[2]
2	Calais Old Pier, p. 409 . . .	„[2]
3	Figure Studies, p. 409 . . .	„
4	Abbeville: West Front of St. Wulfran, pp. 395, 406, 410, 413 . .	Mr. Ruskin
5	Abbeville: North-west Tower of St. Wulfran, p. 410 . . .	Mr. S. G. Prout[3]
6	Abbeville: Photograph of the Porches of St. Wulfran	„
7	Amiens, pp. 392, 410 . . .	„[4]
8	Dieppe: Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, pp. 406, 410, 415, 417 .	„
9	Evreux, pp. 396, 410 . . .	„
10	Strasburg, pp. 396, 401, 410, 415 .	„
11	Strasburg. Lithograph,[5] p. 413 .	„
12	Lisieux, pp. 405 *n.*, 414, 415 . .	„
13	Lisieux. Water-colour Drawing, pp. 403 *n.*, 414, 415 . . .	The Rev. O. Gordon
14	Bayeux, p. 416	Mr. S. G. Prout
15	Shop at Tours, p. 417 . . .	„
16	Rouen: The Tour de Beurre, p. 417	„
17	Rouen: Staircase in St. Maclou, pp. 406, 417	„[6]
18	Ghent, p. 418	„[6]
19	Antwerp, pp. 396, 418 . . .	„[7]
20	Augsburg	Col. T. H. Sale
21	Brunswick, p. 418	Mr. James Knowles

[1] [This Index is reprinted from the original pamphlet, but several additional references are here supplied, and the descriptions are occasionally made more explicit.]
[2] ["Now Mr. Huish's."—*Ill. Ed.*]
[3] ["Now belonging to Mr. John T. Lord."—*Ill. Ed.*]
[4] ["Now the property of Mr. John C. Robinson."—*Ill. Ed.*]
[5] [A lithograph of modern Strasburg: see p. 437.]
[6] ["Now belonging to Mr. J. S. Kennedy."—*Ill. Ed.*]
[7] ["Now belonging to Mr. Young."—*Ill. Ed.*]

Digitized by Google

		Contributed by
22	Dresden, p. 419	Mr. S. G. Prout
23	Prague: The Bridge, pp. 406, 419	,,[1]
24	Prague: The Stadthaus, p. 419	Mr. John Simon
25	Bamberg, p. 419	Mr. S. G. Prout
26	Nuremberg, p. 420	,,[2]
27	Lahnstein	Mr. W. H. Urwick
27*a*	Broadstairs	Mr. A. Keily
28	The Drachenfels, pp. 401, 420	Mr. S. G. Prout
29	Islands on the Rhine, p. 421	,,
30	The Pfalz, p. 421	,,
31	Worms. Water-colour Drawing, p. 421	Mr. G. W. Reid, F.S.A.
32	Worms. Pencil, pp. 406, 421	Mr. S. G. Prout
33	Four Studies of Peasants at Ratisbon, p. 422	,,
34	An Old Water-mill	Mr. Alfred Hunt
35	Ulm, p. 421	Mr. S. G. Prout
36	Ulm. Water-colour Drawing, p. 426	Mrs. C. S. Whitmore
37	Swiss Costumes, p. 422	Mr. S. G. Prout
38	Old Hulk	The Fine Art Society
39	Chillon, p. 422	Mr. S. G. Prout
40	Chillon: The Dungeon, p. 422	,,
41	Montreux	,,
42	Waterfall under the Dent du Midi	,,
43	Martigny Village	,,
44	A Castle	Mr. A. Hunt
45	Mayence	Mrs. C. S. Whitmore
46	Brieg	Mr. S. G. Prout[3]
47	Domó d'Ossola, pp. 396, 419, 422, 431	Mr. Ruskin
48	Como, pp. 397, 426, 431	Mr. S. G. Prout[3]
49	Verona: Monument of Can Signorio della Scala, pp. 391, 423, 434	Mr. Ruskin
50	Same Subject. Water-colour Drawing, p. 423	Mr. J. C. Ottway
51	Verona. Three Pencil Drawings	Mr. S. G. Prout
52	Ghent	Mr. W. J. Stuart
53	Sunrise	Mr. W. Scrivener
54	Martigny Village. Water-colour	Mr. Ruskin
55	Place of St. Mark's, Venice, pp. 403, 427	,,
56	Venice: Ducal Palace from the West, p. 424	,,
57	Venice: Ducal Palace from the East	Mr. S. G. Prout
58	St. Michael's Mount, Normandy, p. 423	,,

[1] ["Now belonging to Mr. Young."—*Ill. Ed.*]
[2] ["Now belonging to Mr. John T. Lord."—*Ill. Ed.*]
[3] ["Now Mr. J. S. Kennedy's."—*Ill. Ed.*]

Digitized by Google

		Contributed by
59	The Grand Canal, Venice, near the Rialto, p. 391	Mr. S. G. Prout
60	The Doge's Palace, Venice, p. 425	The Right Hon. Lord Coleridge
61	Verona	Mr. J. Rhodes
62	Sunset	Mr. J. C. Scrivener
63	The Grand Canal, Venice	Mr. S. G. Prout
64	The Bridge of Sighs	"
65	Bologna: San Giacomo, pp. 396, 419	Mr. S. G. Prout
66	Bologna: The Tower of Garisenda	Mr. Ruskin
67	Arqua: Petrarch's House, p. 430	Mr. S. G. Prout
68	Arqua: Petrarch's Tomb	"
69	Vauxhall	Mr. H. Moore
70	Nuremberg: Dürer's House, p. 430	Mr. S. G. Prout
71	Rome: The Coliseum, pp. 396, 398	"
72	Rome: The Fountain of Egeria	"
73	Kelso, p. 430	Mr. J. W. Gibbs
74	Rouen, p. 430	Mr. S. G. Prout
75	Study of Dutch Boats, p. 431	"
76	Neudersdorf, p. 431	"
77	Gutenfels, p. 431	"
78	An Old Rhine Bridge at Rheinfelden, p. 431	"
79	Munich, p. 431	"
80	Yprès, p. 431	"
81	Rubens's House, Antwerp, pp. 430, 431	"[1]
82	Caen, p. 432	Mr. E. Quaile
83	Falaise, p. 432	"
84	Old Gateway at Monmouth	Mr. A. F. Payne
85	Old Hulk	Mr. H. Howard-Keeling
86	Portico di Ottavia, Rome, p. 432	Mr. W. H. Urwick
87	Well at Strasburg, p. 432	Mr. J. C. Robinson
88	Well at Strasburg, p. 432	Mr. S. G. Prout
89	Well at Nuremberg, p. 433	"
90	Ulm, p. 421	"
91	Prague: Tower of the Gate, p. 419	"
92	Prague: Stadthaus, p. 433	"
93	Brunswick: Rathhaus, p. 419	"
94	Coblenz, p. 434	"
95	English Cottage, pp. 385, 434	Mr. Ruskin
96	Launceston, p. 435	Mr. W. Eastlake
97	Wreck of an East Indiaman	Hon. H. Strutt
98	Frankfort	Mr. A. F. Hollingsworth
99	Marine View	Mr. Safe
100	Verona	Mr. J. J. Wigzell

[1] ["Now Mr. Huish's."—*Ill. Ed.*]

Digitized by Google

		Contributed by
101	Interior of St. Julien at Tours	Mr. S. Castle
102	A Bridge	Mr. A. F. Payne
103	View of a Church	Rev. J. Townsend

[Nos. 1–87 are pencil drawings, except where otherwise stated; 88–94 are lithographs; 95–103 are in colour.]

SUPPLEMENTARY DRAWINGS, Etc.

		Contributed by
104	Calais, p. 408	Mr. Ruskin
104*a*	The Aventine, p. 406	"
105	The Ducal Palace and Bridge of Sighs, p. 424	"
106	Ducal Palace: Foliage of South-west Angle, p. 436	"
106*a*	Photograph of Ducal Palace, p. 425 *n.*	"
107	Pillars of the Piazzetta, p. 427	"
108	Photograph of the Pillars of the Piazzetta, p. 427	"
108*a*	Chiaroscuro Study of the same Pillars, pp. 427, 437	"
109	The Casa d'Oro	"
110	Window on the Grand Canal	"
111	Abbeville Crocket, p. 436	"
112	Oak-leaf, p. 436	"
113	Moss and Oxalis	"

[Nos. 104–113 are drawings by Ruskin, except where otherwise stated.]

114	Floral Decoration, p. 429	Mr. Rooke.
115	Madonna and David, p. 429	"
116	The Prophets, p. 429	"
117	Abbeville [photograph, pp. 388, 417]	
118	Picture of Abbeville [p. 389]	
119	Improvements in Modern London[1]	

HUNT LIST

		Contributed by
120	The Wanderer, pp. 442, 447	Mr. Jas. Orrock
121	The Eavesdropper, pp. 442, 447	Mr. W. Quilter
122	Head of a Mulatto Girl, p. 447	Mr. F. Wigan
123	St. Martin's Church, p. 446	Mr. Ellis

[1] [The illustrated edition added: "119*a*. Portrait of Samuel Prout. Contributed by Mr. Prout-Newcombe."]

Digitized by Google

		Contributed by
124	Somerset House, p. 446	Mr. J. C. Robinson
125	Bullaces, p. 445	Mr. W. Quilter
126	Plums, p. 445	Mr. Ruskin
127	Black Grapes and Strawberries	Mr. Edmund Sibeth
128	Magnum Bonum Plums, p. 445	"
129	Black and White Grapes, p. 445	"
130	Grapes, p. 444	Mr. W. J. Galloway
131	Quinces, p. 444	Mr. Edmund Sibeth
132	"Love what you study, study what you love," pp. 374 *n.*, 444	Mr. George Gurney
133	Plums and Blackberry, p. 445	Mr. Jas. Orrock
134	Black Grapes and Peach	Mr. Ruskin
135	Fruit, p. 445	Mr. Alfred Harris
136	Black and White Grapes	Mr. Jas. Orrock
137	Grapes, Casket, and Peaches	Mr. A. W. Lyon
138	Hare (dead), p. 443	"
139	A Pigeon, pp. 382, 443	Mr. W. Quilter
140	Acorn	Mr. J. W. Knight
141	A Pigeon, p. 443	Mr. Ruskin
142	Flowers and Fruit with Butterfly, p. 440	Mr. George Gurney
143	Pine, Melon, and Grapes, p. 444	The Fine Art Society[1]
144	Herrings and Red Mullet, p. 441	Mr. George Gurney
145	A Pigeon, pp. 382, 443	Mr. Ruskin
146	Dead Chicken, p. 441	"
147	A Bird's Nest, with May Blossom, pp. 442, 446	Mr. Fry
148	Lilac and Bird's Nest, pp. 442, 446	Mr. Edmund Sibeth
149	Fungi, pp. 442, 445	Dr. Drage
150	Vase with Rose, and Basket with Fruit, pp. 442, 446	Mr. Edmund Sibeth
151	Flowers and Fruit, pp. 442, 446	Mr. Jas. Orrock
152	Apple Blossom, p. 442	Mr. George Gurney
153	Dog-roses and Bird's Nest	Mr. R. D. Farnworth
154	Primrose and Bird's Nest, p. 442	Mr. George Gurney
155	Birds' Nests and May Blossom, p. 446	Mr. Ruskin
156	Primroses, p. 442	Mr. Jas. Orrock
157	The Invalid, pp. 442, 446	Mr. S. J. Thacker
158	Sunday Morning, pp. 379, 442	Mr. J. J. Wigzell
158*a*	"Study of a Head"	Mr. G. Peck
159	The Pitcher Girl	Mr. Jas. Orrock
159*a*	Sketch for the drawing of the Fly-catcher	Mr. H. G. Hine
160	Sketch for the drawing of the Cricketer	Mr. Carl Haag
161	The Gipsies, pp. 442, 446	Mr. W. Quilter
162	The Gamekeeper, p. 446	"

[1] ["Now Mr. A. T. Hollingsworth's."—*Ill. Ed.*]

Digitized by Google

		Contributed by
163	Boy startled by a Wasp, pp. 442, 447	Mr. John Rhodes
164	A Young Artist, pp. 442, 446 .	Mr. George Gurney
165	Prayer, pp. 442, 447 . . .	Mr. Prescott Hewett
166	Devotion, pp. 442, 447 . . .	Mr. W. Quilter
167	Girl's Head	Mr. W. J. Galloway
168	Boy with a lighted Candle, pp. 442, 447	Mr. W. Beacall
169	The Blacksmith's Shop, p. 442 .	Mr. W. H. Urwick
170	By the Wayside	Mr. S. J. Thacker
171	The Blessing, pp. 441, 442, 447, 448	Mr. Jas. Orrock
172	The Shy Sitter, pp. 442, 447 . .	"
173	My Father's Boots, pp. 440, 442, 448	Mr. John Rhodes
174	An Interior, pp. 378, 383, 442 .	Mr. Ruskin
175	Boy with Lantern, pp. 442, 447 .	Mr. J. J. Elliott
176	Portrait of Hunt (painted by himself), p. 447	Mr. Sutton Palmer
176*	Grapes—Muscatel, Peach, and Spray of Raspberries	Mr. George Gurney
177	Portrait of Saml. Prout, by Wm. Hunt [reproduced in the illustrated edition of the *Notes by Mr. Ruskin on Samuel Prout and William Hunt*]	Mr. Haydon
178	Portrait of Wm. Hunt, by himself .	Mr. Osler
179	A Green Melon, Grapes, and Plums	Sir John Swinburne, Bart.
180	Shells	Mr. Barnes
181	Dead Pigeons	"
182	A Bit of Mont Blanc . . .	"
183	Bird's Nest and Apple Blossom .	Mr. W. Barfoot
184	The Art Critic	"[1]

[1] [The illustrated edition added: "185. Pencil Sketches. . . . Mr. J. F. Hall." The original editions included finally the following alphabetical "List of Contributors to the Exhibition":—

Barfoot, Mr. W.
Barnes, Mr.
Beacall, Mr. W.
Brown, Dr. John
Coleridge, The Right Hon. Lord
Drage, Dr.
Duncan, Mr. E.
Eastlake, Mr. W.
Elliott, Mr. J. J.
Fry, Mr.
Galloway, Mr. W. J.
Gibbs, Mr. J. W.
Gordon, The Rev. O.
Gurney, Mr. Geo.
Haag, Mr. Carl
Harris, Mr. Alfred
Haydon, Mr.
Hewett, Mr. Prescott
Hine, Mr. H. G.
Hollingsworth, Mr. A. T.
Howard-Keeling, Mr. H.
Hunt, Mr. A.
Keily, Mr. A.
Knight, Mr. J. W.
Knowles, Mr. James
Lyon, Mr. A. W.
Moore, Mr. H.
Orrock, Mr. James
Ottway, Mr. J. C.
Palmer, Mr. Sutton
Payne, Mr. A. F.
Peck, Mr. G.
Prout, Mr. S. G.
Quale, Mr. E.
Quilter, Mr. W.
Reid, Mr. G. W., F.S.A.
Rhodes, Mr. John
Robinson, Mr. J. C.
Ruskin, Mr.
Safe, Mr. James W.
Sale, Colonel
Scrivener, Mr. W. C.
Sibeth, Mr. Edmund
Strutt, The Hon. Henry
Stuart, Mr. W. J.
Swinburne, Sir John
Thacker, Mr. S. J.
The Fine Art Society
Townsend, The Rev. W. J.
Urwick, Mr. W. H.
Whitmore, Mrs. C. S.
Wigan, Mr. F.
Wigzell, Mr. J. J.]

Digitized by Google

APPENDIX

I. LETTERS ON ACADEMY NOTES (1855, 1875)

II. LETTERS TO JAMES SMETHAM (1854–1871)

III. SPEECH ON THOMAS SEDDON (1857)

IV. LETTERS TO G. F. WATTS, R.A. (1860–1866)

V. THE REFLECTION OF RAINBOWS IN WATER (1861)

VI. EVIDENCE BEFORE THE ROYAL ACADEMY COMMISSION (1863)

VII. MODERN CARICATURE (1883, 1888)

VIII. THE ART OF MEZZOTINT (1884)

IX. THE NUDE IN ART (1885)

X. NOTES ON J. E. MILLAIS, R.A. (1886)

XI. PASSAGES FROM EXHIBITION CATALOGUES, ETC.:—

1. An Exhibition of Studies in Oil by the Hon. Stephen Coleridge, 1891 (A Letter of 1884)
2. An Exhibition of Drawings by Sutton Palmer (1886)
3. Thomas Girtin (1887)
4. A Note by Mr. Arthur Severn, R.I. (1892)

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

I

LETTERS ON "ACADEMY NOTES"

(1855, 1875)

[Several letters from Ruskin referring to his *Academy Notes* have already been printed, and are accordingly here included.]

1

[*May* 1855.]

DEAR MR. SMITH,[1]—I believe Spottiswoode must have kept some of their men at home to finish this.[2] I am very much obliged to them, and should like the printers who stayed in to do it to have half-a-crown each, from me, for a holiday present. Will you kindly give orders to that effect. The proofs now sent back must be carefully revised by the press-corrector —but I don't want to see another revise: so the moment they are ready, let the thing be printed off, and sold forthwith as near the doors of the Academy as may be.

Please send a copy of the pamphlet, the moment you have any ready, to Mr. J. F. Lewis; Mr. G. Richmond; Miss A. F. Mutrie;[3] Mr. D. G. Rossetti (14 Chatham Place, Blackfriars Bridge); Mr. William Rossetti, same address; Miss Heaton, 16 Beaumont St., Cavendish Square; Dr. Acland, Oxford; and Mr. Harrison;—all with my compliments.

Send to nobody else—of course Mr. Williams will have one.

I send to town that all may be ready for early press to-morrow morning.

Most truly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

[1] [This letter to Mr. George Smith (of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.) is undated, but must have been written in May 1855. It is here reprinted from the privately-issued (1892) *Letters upon Subjects of General Interest from John Ruskin to Various Correspondents*, pp. 17, 18.]

[2] [That is, the first series of *Academy Notes*, published on June 1, 1855.]

[3] [Whose works were noticed: see above, p. 7. Miss Heaton was a correspondent whom Ruskin was advising on the purchase of pictures. Mr. Harrison is his old friend W. H. Harrison. For Mr. Williams (in the firm of Smith, Elder & Co.) see Vol. VIII. p. 275 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

2

ARTHUR SEVERN'S, HERNE HILL,
London, S.E., 1875.[1]

MY DEAR ELLIS,—So many thanks for your kind letter, and sending to Birmingham, etc. Yes, please get me that Italian economic book.[2]

I must keep the *publishing* of the *Notes* with Allen, not to break the public impression of my obstinacy; but if you would endure the trouble and petty worries of letting them be sold from your counter, you should have them exclusively in London. No—I can't say that, neither—for if other booksellers wanted them I could not refuse; but I will take no measures for regular sale except from your counter,—if you will allow it.

They'll be out next week, very early I hope.

Ever affectionately yours,
J. RUSKIN.

May I put, on title—"G. Allen, Sunnyside, and F. S. Ellis, 29 New Bond Street"?

3

AYLESBURY, *May 28th*, 1875.

MY DEAR ELLIS,—I am very glad to have been brought here at this moment;—the hawthorn, and buttercups with clover, purple and gold, being beyond anything I ever yet dreamed of in England; and the walks through it all so heavenly.

By enclosed note you will see that if I allow £20 per 1000 or £2 per 100, I am well guarded as to cost. Then if you give me £3, 10s. for the hundred, we have both 30 per cent.—which seems to me pleasant and fair? And you can do just as you please about the booksellers, none shall have any but you and Allen.

Mrs. Severn is greatly amused by playing at agency, and has taken orders for 50 or so. She is to have 100,—the first parcel of them sent. Other sendings you can order from Jowett[3] at your own pleasure, but I am still uneasy at the idea of the trouble you will have for so small a matter.

I think *Fors* for June, though delayed for a day or two, won't be a bad one; for the biography, simple though it be, amuses me myself as it comes into my head, and the correspondence tickles me.

Always faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

[1] [This and the following letters are reprinted from the privately-issued volume—*Stray Leaves from Professor Ruskin to a London Bibliopole*, 1892, pp. 22–31.]

[2] [An old Italian book on the *Monte di pietà*.]

[3] [The manager at Messrs. Watson and Hazell's printing works at Aylesbury.]

Digitized by Google

4

AYLESBURY [*May or June* 1875].

MY DEAR ELLIS,—It's immensely good of you undertaking the book together with Allen. I've ordered the title-page, with double publisher, by this post. *Such* a bother as the thing has been to me;—one can't see the pictures for the crowd, and I miss some, and over-rate others, again and again. But there's a nice spicy flavour in it now, I think—as a whole—quite a "loving cup" for the Academy. I get my full revise to-morrow, and send for press on Monday. You will have all you want sent you on the same terms as Allen; and please, offer it in any way you think best to the other booksellers and to the public—only don't advertise in newspapers.

Gratefully yours,
J. R.

5

GEORGE INN, AYLESBURY,
June 1875.

DEAR ELLIS,—*Notes* ready, price 1s. I hope to be sent on Friday.—Can't tell the trade price till to-morrow, but it will be reasonable, I doubt not. The thing is bigger than I meant—fifty-six pages.[1]

Mr. Jowett, Printing Works, Aylesbury, will receive all directions from you. I'm here till Friday.

Ever faithfully yours,
J. R.

6

GEORGE INN, AYLESBURY,
June 1875.

MY DEAR ELLIS,—At the last moment I discover two fatal mistakes[2] in my last sheet of *Notes*, and must cancel it, and you can't have them now till Tuesday. In case you get your packet, mind you send none out; but I hope I've stopped them. They'll be ready on Tuesday.

Ever gratefully yours,
J. R.

LONDON, *June 27th*, 1875.

MY DEAR ELLIS,—I wonder if I've by any chance lost a letter of yours, for I haven't had a single word since the *Notes* came out—and I expected some compliments!—and am disappointed! Please send me just a little line, when you come home again, to Brantwood; though I shan't be there till Wednesday week, I believe—but they'll know where I am.

I left a packet of autographs (the refuse of that nice parcel, which seemed to me to spoil the rest) in Bond St. the other day. If they're the least use to anybody you can put them in auction, or allow me for them; if not, send them to care of Arthur Burgess, 73 Montpelier Road, Peckham, S.E.

Always affectionately yours,
J. R.

[1] [As a matter of fact the pamphlet consisted of fifty-*nine* pages.]
[2] [Merely misprints, to rectify which the sheet was cancelled.]

Digitized by Google

II

LETTERS TO JAMES SMETHAM[1]

(1854–1871)

1

DENMARK HILL, *15th Nov.* 1854.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am quite amazed, almost awed, by the amount of talent and industry and thoughtfulness shown in these books of yours. What is the nature of your artistic occupation? I am very anxious to know all that you are willing to tell me about yourself. Please let me keep the volumes at least until Tuesday next. I cannot look them over properly sooner; and meantime send me a line, if I may ask you to take this trouble, telling me what your real employment in life has been, and how your genius has been employed or *un*employed in it.—Faithfully yours, and obliged,

J. RUSKIN.

[1] [James Smetham (1821–1889), draughtsman, painter, and essayist, had attended Ruskin's lectures at the Architectural Museum in 1854 (Vol. XII. pp. 474–508)—his biographer states (p. 23) at the Working Men's College, but the College had not at that time been founded—and was led to show some of his books of drawings, which Ruskin took home for their better inspection. This brought from him the first of the letters here reprinted from the *Letters of James Smetham, with an Introductory Memoir, edited by Sarah Smetham and William Davies*, 1891, p. 23.

Smetham's reply (November 16, 1854) will be found at pp. 2–7 of the *Letters*. He gave an interesting account of his early impressions and struggles. "I exhibited in Liverpool first," he added, "in 1847; at the Academy in 1851, 1852, 1853, and 1854, but the last two years my best picture was returned and the portraits put in." He said that he was partly employed as a drawing-master at the Wesleyan Normal School, Westminster. He did not complain of want of employment or appreciation, but he yearned for sympathy.

Ruskin asked leave to show at his next lecture one of Smetham's drawings, and this was done. It was the drawing of "The Last Supper," praised by Ruskin in Vol. XII. p. 506. In later years Smetham made a picture from it, "The Hymn of the Last Supper," which was exhibited in the studio of his friend Rossetti and afterwards well hung (through the good offices of Watts) at the Academy, in 1869 (No. 450).

Smetham's acquaintance with Ruskin, thus commenced, led to a visit at Denmark Hill in 1855, of which his account has been quoted in Vol. V. pp. xlvii., xlviii., and to a return visit by Ruskin (see the *Letters*, p. 69).

In February 1857 Smetham sent to Ruskin a drawing which was the first conception of a picture painted by him four years afterwards called "The Women of the Crucifixion." "It represented the women who beheld the crucified Jesus 'afar off,' their countenances suffused with devout anguish and pity" (*Letters*, p. 18). The

Digitized by Google

2

February 1857.

Dear Mr. Smetham,—I hardly know whether I am more gratified by your kindly feeling or more sorry that you should think it is in any wise necessary to express it in so costly a way; for costly this drawing has been to you, both of time, thought, and physical toil. I have hardly ever seen any work of the kind so far carried as the drawing in the principal face. I shall indeed value it highly: but if indeed you think any words or thoughts of mine have been ever true to you, *pray* consider these likely to be the truest, that it is unsafe for you, with your peculiar temperament, to set yourself subjects of this pathetic and exciting kind for some time to come. Your health is not sturdy: you are not satisfied with what you do; and have to do *some* work that is irksome and tedious to you. If your work is divided between that which is tedious and that which tries your feelings and intellect to the utmost, no nervous system can stand it; and you should, I am very strongly persuaded, devote yourself to drawing and painting pretty and pleasant faces and things, involving little thought or pathos until, your skill being perfectly developed, you find yourself able to touch the higher chords without effort. I should like to know, if you have leisure any day to tell me, your entire meaning in this drawing. Is it merely the women at the cross with the multitude behind deriding; or have you intended any typical character in it?

I hope Mrs. Smetham is well, and that she will forgive me for being the cause of this additional toil to you.—With sincere remembrances to her, believe me, gratefully yours,

J. Ruskin.

picture is in the collection of the painter's friend and patron Mr. J. S. Budgett, of Stoke Park, Guildford. The drawing brought from Ruskin the second letter, here reprinted from p. 19 of the *Letters*.

Ruskin's kindly warning proved prophetic, for in the autumn of 1857 occurred Smetham's "first serious illness, giving intimation, as it were, of the darker years by which his life was closed." Subsequently Smetham "sought to make his way into book illustration, but without much success"; he accordingly invited subscriptions for a separate issue of etchings from his own designs. In connexion with this scheme, which continued in operation for three years, he received the letters (3), reprinted from p. 21 of the *Letters*. The etchings were afterwards collected under the title *Studies from an Artist's Sketch-Book*.

To the same date and subject belongs the extract from a letter (4,) reprinted from p. 82 of the *Letters*.

The next letter (5), reprinted from p. 148, was in answer to one telling of the death of Smetham's mother.

The success of Smetham's "Hymn of the Last Supper" led him to execute other paintings of large subjects, but these were rejected at the Academy. He found, however, private purchasers, and was rich in the appreciation and friendship of discriminating judges such as Rossetti, Shields, Mr. Budgett, and the late Lady Mount Temple. He still corresponded with Ruskin, as appears from letter (6), reprinted from p. 222 of the *Letters*.

In 1878 his health gave way. "The light of the fine intellect faded. He abode in the silence of a closed spirit. . . . He died on February 5, 1889" (*Letters*, p. 29). Ruskin wrote of the event (*ibid.*, p. 27) as being

> "one of the most deeply mourned losses to me among the few friends with whom I could take 'sweet counsel.'"]

Digitized by Google

3

[1859.]

My dear Smetham,—I received your interesting letter with great pleasure, and you may use my name in any way you please among your friends, but I would not have it in public prints except unconspicuously and alphabetically under letter R. It is impossible, however, to see you just now. I am just finishing *Modern Painters*, and can really see not even my best friends, among whom I am proud to class you. With best regards to Mrs. Smetham,—Affectionately yours,

J. Ruskin.

. . . I think the last *very* beautiful indeed,[1] and it is quite a lesson in etching to me just now, which I much wanted.

. . . These etchings of yours are very wonderful and beautiful; I admire both exceedingly. But pray, on account of the fatigue, don't work so finely, and don't draw so much on your imagination. Try and do a few easier subjects than this Noah one.[2] The labour of that has been tremendous.

4

[1860.]

"I never wrote a private letter to any human being which I would not let a bill-sticker chalk up six feet high on Hyde Park wall, and stand myself in Piccadilly and say 'I said it.'"[3]

5

3rd March 1867.

Dear Smetham,—Thank you for your note. I am always glad to hear from you. You are happy in feeling that your mother *is* "at rest." My father died this day three years; but *I* look, when I pass, at the place where he lies, as at a prison from the blue sky and things he loved. I've had many a loss since of various kinds, too—Deaths in life: worse than Deaths true. You are very happy in your peace.—Ever affectionately yours,

J. Ruskin.

[1] [The subject was "The Last Sleep."]

[2] ["The etching here alluded to was one of the building of the ark, containing many figures, elaborated to a high degree of finish" (*Letters*, p. 21).]

[3] [This extract occurs in a letter of Smetham's, dated October 20, 1860: "I have had some kind letters from Ruskin, one giving me leave to print anywhere or anyhow any opinion he may have expressed about my work in private letters, in bits, in wholes, or how I like; and concluding with a very characteristic sentence: 'I never . . . I said it.' Isn't that 'spirity,' but is it not also very grand?" Compare the passage in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 59—"I never wrote a letter in my life which all the world are not welcome to read if they will"—which served as a motto to *Arrows of the Chace*.]

Digitized by Google

6

OXFORD, 1st *January* 1871.

MY DEAR SMETHAM,—I cannot easily tell you how glad I am to have your letter, how more than glad to know of your tranquil and honourable life. Long may it thus continue. But let me have a line sometimes to say that it does so. If I cannot answer, you will know it is only because my hand is weary, or the power of the dog gone before its task is done.—Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

Digitized by Google

III

SPEECH ON THOMAS SEDDON[1]

(1857)

1. Mr. Ruskin commenced by remarking that it was no part of his intention, in appearing before them, to enter into a general consideration of the views which had actuated the formation of the committee which had been set on foot, relative to the purchase by the nation of Seddon's great picture of Jerusalem, which was now exhibited before them. There were associated in that committee men of various opinions and of various

[1] [Thomas Seddon (1821–1856) was the son of the eminent cabinetmaker, and was brought up to his father's business, devoting himself more particularly to the designing of furniture. He subsequently adopted painting as his profession, and was a devotee of the strictest sect of the Pre-Raphaelites. In 1849, when he went on his first sketching tour to Bettws-y-Coed, we see the spirit in which he approached his art. He was in the company of several artists, and was much surprised at their thinking a day enough for a sketch, for which to him weeks seemed all too few. He applauded too, says his biographer, "the heroic resolution of an amateur who declared he would give himself three weeks' hard labour to endeavour to draw one single branch of a tree properly, and would only go on drawing if he found he succeeded in that attempt." In 1853 he accompanied Holman Hunt to the East, whence he returned in 1854 with two finished pictures, the "Pyramids of Ghizeh," and "Jerusalem and the Valley of Jehoshaphat"; the latter is now No. 563 in the Tate Gallery. It was painted on the spot, and took five months' continuous work in its execution. "After visiting every part of the city," he wrote from Jerusalem, "and surrounding country to determine what I would do, I have encamped upon the hill to the south, looking up the valley of Jehoshaphat; I have sketched the view which I see from the opening of my tent. I am painting from one hundred yards higher up, where I see more of the valley, with the Tombs of the Kings and Gethsemane. I get up before five, breakfast, and begin soon after six. I come in at twelve and dine, and sleep for an hour; and then, about two, paint till sunset." During all this time Seddon camped out—sleeping in a deserted tomb in the Field of Aceldama, on the Hill of Evil Counsel. On his return to London, Seddon opened an exhibition of his Eastern sketches at 14 Berners Street (March–June 1855):—

"Mr. Ruskin came," he writes, "and stayed a long time. He was much pleased with everything and especially 'Jerusalem,' which he praised wonderfully; and in good truth it is something for a man who has studied pictures so much to say, 'Well, Mr. S., before I saw these, I never thought it possible to attain such an effect of tone and light without sacrificing truth of colour.'"

In 1856 he had another exhibition of his works, this time at Conduit Street. In the autumn of that year he set out for a second journey to the East, but was seized with dysentery and died at Cairo, where he is buried. A movement was then set on foot for promoting some memorial to the painter. The following letter (reprinted

Digitized by Google

professions, and there was such a contrast in the characters of the individuals who had united to further this object, that it could hardly be expected that he should appear before this meeting in any way as the exponent of all their various views. He might perhaps be allowed, in some measure, to express the views of that portion of the committee who began the movement, [and] with whom he entirely sympathised.

2. He believed that some objection had been taken to the idea of placing this picture in the national collection of paintings, because it was said that they sought to bring it forward as a unique picture, or as one so admirable that they were never likely to look upon such again. For his own part he differed from that view. It was not because he considered it

from *Ruskin, Rossetti, and Pre-Raphaelitism*, by W. M. Rossetti, 1899, p. 158) refers to the preliminary arrangements :—

> "My dear William,—I shall be very happy if I can be of use in this matter; but I don't quite see of what use I could be at this first meeting. I think that, if the points I spoke of on Monday are those which the Committee think it would be well to mark in the prospectus, I could set down for you quite as much as I said about them at last meeting; but I couldn't do this *at* a meeting, but in a quiet evening at home. If you want me at the next meeting, however, make said meeting here [Denmark Hill], and I will make you all as comfortable as I can. At half-past seven, you shall have tea and muffins—and ink. I can't come out on Friday night; I'm always tired and apt to catch cold after the College night.
>
> "I am very sorry I have seen so little of you lately; it is not my fault. I can't work hard at present, and can't keep up with my correspondence and casual demands on time but by staying at home like a dormouse. But I have sincere regard for you, and your brother, and Miss Rossetti—just as much as ever—and am heartily sorry to see so little of you.
>
> "Yours always faithfully,
>
> "J. Ruskin."

The meeting was ultimately held at Holman Hunt's house. At this meeting, Ruskin remarked :—

> "The position which Mr. Seddon occupied as an artist appears to deserve some public recognition quite other than could be generally granted to genius, however great, which had been occupied only in previously beaten paths. Mr. Seddon's works are the first which represent a truly historic landscape art; that is to say, they are the first landscapes uniting perfect artistical skill with topographical accuracy, being directed with stern self-restraint to no other purpose than that of giving to persons who cannot travel trustworthy knowledge of the scenes which ought to be most interesting to them. Whatever degrees of truth may have been attained or attempted by previous artists have been more or less subordinate to pictorial and dramatic effect. In Mr. Seddon's works the primal object is to place the spectator, as far as art can do, in the scene represented, and to give him the perfect sensation of its reality, wholly unmodified by the artist's execution."

This report appeared in *Memoirs and Letters of the late Thomas Seddon, Artist.* By his brother. 1858, (also 2nd ed., 1859) p. 171. Subsequently a Committee was formed, consisting of Ruskin, Ford Madox Brown, Holman Hunt, Mr. W. M. Rossetti, and others, to arrange an exhibition of the artist's works and promote a memorial. The exhibition was held at the rooms of the Society of Arts, where a conversazione was held on May 6 to further the latter object. At this meeting Ruskin delivered the

Digitized by Google

remarkable, but because he considered it *not* remarkable, that he wished this picture to become the property of the nation; he regarded it as the type of a class of pictures and of works which might be understood and imitated by other men, and the understanding of which would be advantageous to the nation in future.

3. In like manner it had been said that it was sought, as it were, to canonise Seddon as a saint—immortalise him as a hero—that they wished to bring forward his death as a martyrdom to the cause of painting. But it was not so. The death of Seddon had nothing remarkable or extraordinary in its character, but was merely a type of a class of deaths which were being continually offered up to the nation by great and good men, but which, in this case, a concurrence of pathetic circumstances justified them in bringing before the public notice. The simple sacrifice of life had in it nothing unusual—it was, on the contrary, a melancholy thing to reflect how continually we all of us lived upon the lives of others, and that in two ways, viz., upon lives which we take, and upon lives which are given. It was a terrible expression to use—this taking of life, but it was a true one. We took life in all cases in which, either for higher wages, or by the compulsion of commercial pressure, men were occupied without sufficient protection or guardianship in dangerous employments, involving an average loss of life, for which life we paid thoughtlessly in the price of the commodity, which, so far, was the price of blood. Nay, more than this, it was a well-recognised fact that there was scarcely an art or a science in the present day, in which there was not some concomitant circumstance of danger or disease, which science had not striven to abate proportionably with the endeavours to advance the skill of the workmen. And thus, though we had abolished slavery, we literally bargained daily for the lives of our fellow-men, although we should shrink with horror at the idea of purchasing their bodies; and if these evils, arising partly from pressure of population, but more from carelessness and cruelty in masters and consumers, from desire of cheapness, or blind faith in commercial necessities—if these evils went on increasing at the rate it seemed but too probable they would, England would soon have to add another supporter to her shield. She had good right still to her lion, never more than now. But she needed, in justice, another, to show that if she could pour forth life blood nobly, she could also drink it cruelly; she should have not only the lion, but the vampire. These remarks applied to what was only too justly termed the taking of life; but in other cases lives were given, as by the active and enterprising explorer of unknown regions, and the brave and devoted soldier and sailor. These sacrifices we might accept, if the

address which is reported above. A sum of nearly £600 was raised by public subscription, Ruskin acting as treasurer of the fund. The "Jerusalem" was bought from Seddon's widow for 400 guineas for presentation to the National Gallery, and the balance of the fund was paid over to her.

The report of Ruskin's speech first appeared in the *Journal of the Society of Arts*, May 8, 1857, vol. v. pp. 360–362. It was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, vol. iii. pp. 88–92, and thence again reprinted in the privately-printed *Ruskiniana*, Part ii., 1892, pp. 162–166. The short remarks given in this note were also reprinted in both places. The numbering of the paragraphs is added here. The last eight lines of § 11 also appeared in *Memoir and Letters of the late Thomas Seddon, Artist*, 1858 (also 2nd ed., 1859), p. 173.]

Digitized by Google

cause in which they were offered was a just one. He had to bring before them that evening an instance of such a sacrifice, and to explain and justify its cause.

4. Mr. Ruskin then graphically reviewed the progress in the art of painting from the eighth and tenth centuries up to the time of Raphael, and exhibited some of the early specimens of English art, which, by their quaintness of design and colouring, created considerable amusement amongst the audience. He also called attention to remarkable specimens around the room of the Pre-Raphaelite style, tracing the development of that style by an analysis of the state of Italian art when the Pre-Raphaelite principle first began to operate upon it. The whole secret of the progress of Italian art from the eighth century up to the time of Raphael, was to be found in the simplicity and truthfulness of the principle followed throughout—simplicity of principle and earnestness of purpose. Art was then unembarrassed by the disputes of critics. There was an intense religious purpose at the root of it, and an intense simplicity of approbation in the minds of the people. They received all that was done frankly, and frankly admired it. There was richness and truth in the decoration, and they never restricted their inventive genius for fear that anything might be overloaded. The richer their work was, the better they liked it. They made their walls as gorgeous as they could; they innocently, and always, loved bright colours and beautiful forms, striving, however, chiefly to add more and more of truthfulness to their representations.

5. It was not the pursuit of beauty that led from "The Serpent beguiling Eve"[1] up to the Madonna of Raphael, but it was the greater accuracy of perception, and greater veracity of the lines, which led the artist on. He need not dwell upon the powers which the Italians had, up to the fifteenth century, of bringing forward the greatest arts. After that period both the principles to which he had adverted were broken through. They reached the climax of power, and then yielded to the abandonment of the principles which led to it. They lost their love of truth, and pursued beauty instead of it. They lost their earnestness of heart, and aimed only at amusement. Hence, in Italy an art falsely beautiful, and in Flanders an art meanly imitative.

6. Modern Pre-Raphaelitism was a reaction against both these errors. It sought veracity more than beauty; but such veracities only as were useful to mankind. Pre-Raphaelitism was simply to be defined as "the pursuit of truth in art, with a useful purpose," and one of the main advantages of its system was to bring into service minds of every class; for, in all ages, there were the two great classes of artists, men of inventive minds, and men of more or less prosaic minds; and the great danger of following the theory of beauty only, was to make the matter-of-fact minds comparatively useless, and yet they were the most common amongst them. There were more men capable of pursuing a simple problem, or representing a simple fact, than there were men capable of following at any distance in the path of the great inventive painters. The object of a nation should be to make all artists equally useful and happy, and to bring the gift of every man into effective service, and make his life honourable, worthy, and useful to the nation to which he belonged.

[1] [See the figure in *Two Paths*, § 31.]

Digitized by Google

7. The Pre-Raphaelites had been regarded as one class of men only. He wished to explain to them that they were composed of two entirely separate classes. There were the poetical Pre-Raphaelites and the prosaic Pre-Raphaelites, and the prosaic were the more important of the two. The spirit of the present age was strictly scientific, and all that they could do more than was done in the earlier ages must be on the side of truth, and could not be on the side of imagination. The earlier times were what the brilliant, active imagination of youth was compared to the seriousness and earnestness of old age, when it was earnest—for frivolous old age was the most frivolous of all—but it was most true that as they were aged amongst nations so they might become greater than those which had gone before them, if they brought out the peculiar character which God had impressed upon them. The peculiar power of poetry upon them at present was more or less lost from the quantity supplied. They did not want an unlimited number of poetical fancies, but they wanted a continuous advance in the knowledge of facts; and, without denying the use of all that had been done by our great poets, still they did not want an increase in the quantity of poetry. Their habits were getting more superficial in literature, because they were constantly seeking to add to the stores of imagination, whilst they had not time enough to add to the stores of fact. Thus they were too much neglecting the gifts which had been bequeathed to them by their ancestors, and they would be wiser to turn their attention in some degree away from modern imagination, and preserve more perfectly that which was produced when the nations of Europe were young.

8. Science had brought forward the disposition to test facts more accurately, which was adverse, more or less, to imagination, but which should direct to the grasping of the facts around them; and it was this special direction of painting which, he believed, ought to be cultivated. They too often wasted intellect now by trying to make it imaginative. They might waste the life of a man by leading him to imitate the powers of another; but they could not lead one inventive mind to greater powers than it had originally, or to grasp a greater range than that which God had appointed for it; but what they could do was to prevent persons from wasting their energies, and attempting that of which they were incapable. If they imparted knowledge and industry enough, the imagination would come out. Without knowledge and industry none of those feelings would be nobly or justly expressed.

9. The works of Thomas Seddon had to his (Mr. Ruskin's) mind arisen at a period of momentous importance to the whole of Europe. In proportion, it would seem, as nations advanced in mercantile importance, as commerce advanced, so the influential persons of all countries seemed bent upon destroying whatever stood in the way of modern improvement, and the work of destruction was going on fatally throughout France and Italy. In England it had been accomplished already, but it was taking place, in proportion to the prosperity of a country, over all Europe. Therefore it was that he was anxious that pictures in modern days should be addressed to the representation simply of facts, to the representation either of architecture or scenery, of which the associations were likely to be swept away by what was called modern progress or improvement.[1] This was the cause which the committee

[1] [On this subject, compare Vol. XII. pp. 314, 315.]

Digitized by Google

had it in their minds to bring before the Society of Arts on the present occasion. This cause had been advanced by many men, before the sacrifice of Seddon's life. But there was this, at least, of singular and pathetic in what Mr. Seddon had done—that he had turned away, of his own free will, from the paths of imagination to those of historical and matter-of-fact representation. They would see, on one side of the room, the noble picture "Penelope."[1] That was the first which Mr. Seddon painted. It was noble in every possible way. It showed inventive genius of the highest order; yet Mr. Seddon, deliberately measuring his own strength, and measuring the importance of the two tasks which lay at his choice, sternly turned from the temptations of Fancy, and set out on a journey of danger and long self-denial, in order faithfully to record the scenery of the Holy Land.

10. Not only was Seddon peculiar in the direction which he gave to his Pre-Raphaelite endeavours, but it was to be added that Seddon took a peculiar interest in the welfare of the workmen of England. Mr. Ruskin proceeded to narrate the establishment by Seddon, with the co-operation of Neville Warren, of the first school of design in London, called the North London School of Design for workmen, in Camden Town, the principal superintendence of which devolved upon Seddon himself, conjointly with the satisfaction of the other arduous claims upon his time, attention, and hard labour.[2] His great exertions during that period of his life, it was believed, impaired his constitution, and were regarded as the primal cause of the failure of his health in Syria, and his dying there.

11. Mr. Ruskin then entered into a recital of the labours of Seddon in his last great work of "Jerusalem," and concluded by appealing to the Society and those present to aid in doing justice to one of our greatest artists by the recognition of his genius. It was the object of the Committee to purchase for the nation, from Mr. Seddon's widow, his picture of "Jerusalem, with the Mount of Olives," and to present it, in memory of Mr. Seddon, to the National Gallery. The picture was valued at the price of four hundred guineas. A subscription for that purpose had been opened, in which all persons were invited to join who either felt respect for Mr. Seddon's genius, or desired to promote the objects to which he had sacrificed his life. What sum might remain after the picture (poorly valued, Mr. Ruskin thought, at such a price) had been purchased, it was intended by the Committee to ask Mrs. Seddon to accept; and Mr. Ruskin hoped that the Society of Arts, which

[1] [A collection of pictures and sketches by Seddon was exhibited at the Society of Arts on the occasion of Ruskin's address. "Penelope" was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1851, but "hung in the very top row, where it could only be seen through an opera-glass"; afterwards in the possession of Mr. George Wilson, of Redgrave Hall, Suffolk. "The pains he took to secure truthfulness in a subject which, by its very nature, seemed to preclude it, were extraordinary. He constructed a model of the apartment in which the heroine is represented, with an opening for the window, with the curtain partition, and with the loom itself; and he hung up a taper in order to study the effect of the double light; and at the British Museum and elsewhere he studied most carefully the costumes and manners of the Greeks" (*Memoir*, pp. 16, 17).]

[2] [Two hundred workmen enrolled themselves as students. Mr. W. Cave Thomas was the master; Mr. J. Neville Warren, the secretary. For an account of Seddon's labours, see the *Memoir*, pp. 10–12. The school made a point, which was then a novelty, of setting the pupils to copy from objects, instead of from drawings (as was then the practice in the Government Schools of Art).]

Digitized by Google

had honoured him with their permission to bring these circumstances before them, would set the seal of their approval to the merit of the painter, and thus grant the only comfort which was now possible to his widow, whose sorrow must be deeper and more poignant in proportion to the greatness of the hopes she had cherished, as she watched the unfolding genius of her husband. It was for the Society now to decide whether they would further this noble cause of Truth in Art, while they gave honour to a good and great man, and consolation to those who loved him, or whether they would add one more to the victories of oblivion, and suffer this picture, wrought in the stormy desert of Aceldama, which was the last of his labours, to be also the type of their reward; whether they would suffer the thorn and the thistle to choke the seed that he had sown, and the sand of the desert to weep over his forgotten grave.

Digitized by Google

IV

LETTERS TO G. F. WATTS, R.A.[1]

(1860–1866)

1

Saturday evening, 29th September, 1860.

Dear Watts,—I am very glad to have your letter to-night, having been downhearted lately and unable to write to my friends, yet glad of being remembered by them. I have kept a kind letter of Mrs. Prinsep's by me ever so long. It came too late to be answered before the birthday of which it told me.

I will come and sit whenever and wherever and as long as you like. I have nothing whatever to do, and don't mean to have. I hope to be at National Gallery on Tuesday [erased], Wednesday [erased, see end of note], and Thursday afternoons, two to four, not exactly working, but wondering. I entirely feel with you that there is no dodge in Titian. It is simply right doing with a care and dexterity alike unpractised among us nowadays. It is drawing with paint as tenderly as you do with chalk. . . . I suspect that Titian depended on states and times in colouring more than we do; that he left such and such colours for such and such times always before retouching, and so on; but this you would not call dodge—would you?—but merely perfect knowledge of means. It struck me in looking at your group with child in the Academy[2] that you depended too much on blending and too little on handling colour; that you were not simple enough nor quick enough to do all you felt; nevertheless it was very beautiful. I should think you were tormented a little by having too much feeling.

If it is fine to-morrow I have promised to take a drive, but the second fine day, whatever that may be this week, I shall be at Trafalgar Square.

[1] [These letters were first published by Mrs. Richmond Ritchie in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, March 1890, pp. 590, 600, and next reprinted in her *Records of Tennyson, Ruskin, and Browning*, 1892, pp. 136–139. They were also reprinted in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, 1890, i. 105–107. For Ruskin's early appreciation of Watts, see Vol. XI. p. 30 *n.*]

[2] [No. 86 in the exhibition of 1860: "Mrs. George Cavendish Bentinck and her Children."]

Digitized by Google

2

5th February, 1861.

My dear Watts,—Kind thanks for writing to ask for me. I am not unwell materially, but furiously sulky and very quiet over my work, and mean to be so, and having been hitherto a rather voluble and demonstrative person, people think I'm ill. I'm not cheerful, certainly, and don't see how anybody in their senses can be.

I did not say—did I?—that you were not to aim at all qualities; but not all at once. Titian was born of strong race, and with every conceivable human advantage, and probably before he was twelve years old knew all that could be done with oil-painting. We are under every conceivable human disadvantage, and we must be content to go slowly. If you try at present to get all Titian's qualities, you will assuredly get none. You not only have seen Titians and Correggios which united all, but I don't suppose you ever saw a true Titian or Correggio which did not unite all. But that does not in the least warrant you in trying at once to do the same; you have many things to discover which they learned with their alphabet, many things to cure yourself of which their master never allowed them to fall into habit of. For instance, from long drawing with chalk point you have got a mottled and broken execution, and have no power of properly modulating the brush. Well, the way to cure yourself of that is not by trying for Titian or Correggio, whose modulations are so exquisite that they perpetually blend invisibly with the point-work, but take a piece of absolute modulation—the head of the kneeling figure in Sir Joshua's "Three Graces" at Kensington,[1] for instance—and do it twenty times over and over again, restricting yourself wholly to his number of touches and thereabouts. Then you will feel exactly where you are, and what is the obstacle in that direction to be vanquished; you will feel progress every day, and be happy in it; while, when you try for everything, you never know what is stopping you. Again, the chalk drawing has materially damaged your perception of the subtlest qualities of local colour. When a form is shown by a light of one colour and a reflex of another, both equal in depth, if we are drawing in chalk we must exaggerate either one or the other, or the form must be invisible. The habit of exaggeration is fatal to the colour vision; to conquer it you should paint the purest and subtlest coloured objects on a small scale till you can realise them thoroughly. I say on a small scale; otherwise the eye does not come to feel the value of points of hue. This exercise, nearly the reverse of the modulation exercise, could not be healthily carried on together with it. And so on with others.

I write with an apparently presumptuous positiveness, but my own personal experience of every sort of feebleness is so great that I have a right to do so on points connected with it.

Sincere regards to all friends.

Ever affectionately yours,
J. R.

[1] [Now at the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, No. 79.]

Digitized by Google

3

DENMARK HILL, S.,
Wednesday, 25th July, 1866.

MY DEAR WATTS,—I heard to-day from Edward[1] that he thought you would like to come and see me—or me to come to you.

You have not been here for ever so long. Can you come out any day to breakfast?—and we'll have a nice talk—or would you rather I should come in the afternoon? I rarely stir in the morning. I want to see you. I've been very ill and sad lately, or should have managed it.

Send me just a line to say what day you could come, or see me.

Ever yours affectionately,
J. RUSKIN.

Ned says you have been doing beautiful things. And therefore I should like to come, as you won't exhibit and leave Maclise's "Death of Nelson"[2] to edify the public. . . .

[1] [Burne-Jones.]
[2] [A large fresco in the Royal, or Victoria, Gallery, in the Houses of Parliament—completed by Maclise, after great labour, in 1864 : see below, p. 488.]

Digitized by Google

V

THE REFLECTION OF RAINBOWS IN WATER[1]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *LONDON REVIEW*

SIR,—I do not think there is much difficulty in the rainbow business. We cannot see the reflection of the same rainbow which we behold in the sky, but we see the reflection of another invisible one within it. Suppose A and B, Fig. 1, are two falling raindrops, and the spectator is at S, and X Y

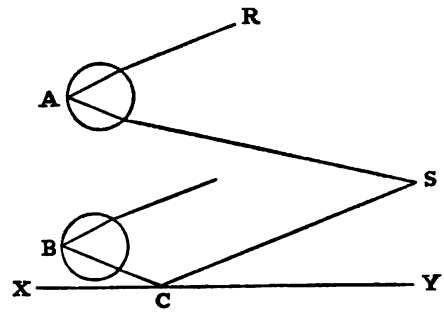


Fig. 1

is the water surface. If R A S be a sun ray giving, we will say, the red ray in the visible rainbow, the ray, B C S, will give the same red ray, reflected from the water at C.

It is rather a long business to examine the lateral angles, and I have

[1] [This letter appeared in the *London Review*, May 16, 1861, and was reprinted in *Arrows of the Chace*, 1880, vol. i. pp. 299–301. The *London Review* of May 4 had contained a critique of the Exhibition of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours, which included a notice of Mr. Duncan's "Shiplake, on the Thames" (No. 52), for which artist, see above, p. 81. In this picture the artist had painted a rainbow reflected in the water, the truth of which to nature was questioned by some of his critics. Ruskin's was not the only letter in support of the picture's truth. On the general subject, see the Introduction, above, p. xxxvii. The reflection of rainbows is discussed (to the same effect as here) at pp. 21–24 of Sir Montagu Pollock's book there referred to.]

Digitized by Google

not time to do it; but I presume the result would be that if a m b, Fig. 2, be the visible rainbow, and x y the water horizon, the reflection will be the dotted line c e d, reflecting, that is to say, the invisible bow, c n d; thus, the terminations of the arcs of the visible and reflected bows do not coincide.

The interval, m n, depends on the position of the spectator with respect

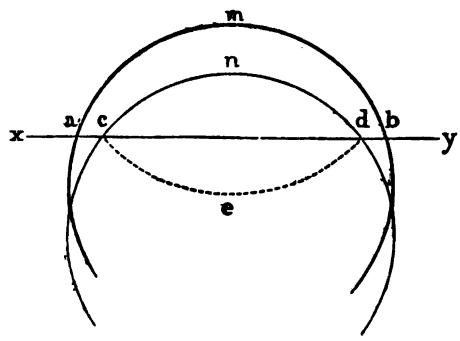


Fig. 2

to the water surface. The thing can hardly ever be seen in nature, for if there be rain enough to carry the bow to the water surface, that surface will be ruffled by the drops, and incapable of reflection.

Whenever I have seen a rainbow over water (sea, mostly), it has stood on it reflectionless; but interrupted conditions of rain might be imagined which would present reflection on near surfaces.

Always very truly yours,

J. Ruskin.

7th May, 1861.

Digitized by Google

VI

THE ROYAL ACADEMY COMMISSION[1]

EVIDENCE OF JOHN RUSKIN, MONDAY, JUNE 8, 1863

1. *Chairman.* You have, no doubt, frequently considered the position of the Royal Academy in this country?—Yes.

2. Is it in all points satisfactory to you?—No, certainly not.

3. Do you approve, for example, of the plan by which, on a vacancy occurring, the Royal Academicians supply that vacancy, or would you wish to see that election confided to any other hands?—I should wish to see the election confided to other hands. I think that all elections are liable to mistake, or mischance, when the electing body elect the candidate

[1] [This report of Ruskin's evidence first appeared in "*The Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Present Position of the Royal Academy in Relation to the Fine Arts.*" London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1863 (pp. 546–555. Questions 5079–5142). The Commission consisted of Earl Stanhope (*Chairman*), Viscount Hardinge, Lord Elcho, Sir E. W. Head, Mr. William Stirling, Mr. H. D. Seymour, and Mr. Henry Reeve, all of whom, except Mr. Seymour, were present at the above sitting. The evidence was reprinted in *On the Old Road*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 602–623 (§§ 459–482), and again in the second edition of that work, vol. ii. pp. 215–242 (§§ 168–191). The questions are here re-numbered.

The following analysis of the above evidence was given in the Index to the Report (pp. 139, 140):—

1–8. The Academy not in all points satisfactory. Would wish to see the Academicians not self-elected.—But by a constituency consisting both of artists and the public.—Public influence to be the same in painting as in music.

9, 10. As to the Associates: is in favour of some period of probation.—Their class to be unlimited, with a very limited number of Academicians.

11, 12, 36, 49–55. Has formed no opinion on the question of introducing laymen into the Academy; in matters of revenue they might be joined with artists, but not in the selection and hanging of pictures: opposed on the whole to their introduction, considering the present state of art education.

13. As he would like to see the Academy constituted, thinks the president ought to be an artist.

14–16. General effect of the Academy's teaching upon the art of the country merely nugatory.—Would have a much more comprehensive system of teaching.

17. The Academy education to correspond wholly to the University education.

18. Not easy but very necessary for the Academy to adopt an authoritative sys of teaching.

21. His idea of what the Academy teaching should be; would have a school of chemistry.

22, 23. The teaching of wall-painting in permanent materials should be a branch, possibly the principal branch.

Digitized by Google

into them. I rather think that elections are only successful where the candidate is elected into a body other than the body of electors; but I have not considered the principles of election fully enough to be able to give any positive statement of opinion upon that matter. I only feel that at present the thing is liable to many errors and mischances.

4. Does it not seem, however, that there are some precedents, such, for example, as the Institute of France, in which the body electing to the vacancies that occur within it keeps up a very high character, and enjoys a great reputation?—There are many such precedents; and, as every such body for its own honour must sometimes call upon the most intellectual men of the country to join it, I should think that every such body must retain a high character where the country itself has a proper sense of the worth of its best men; but the system of election may be wrong, though the sense of the country may be right; and I think, in appealing to a precedent to justify a system, we should estimate properly what has been brought about by the feeling of the country. We are all, I fancy, too much in the habit of looking to forms as the cause of what really is caused by the temper of the nation at the particular time, working, through the forms, for good or evil.

5. If, however, the election of Academicians were to be confided to artists who were not already Academicians themselves, would it be easy to meet this objection, that they would have in many cases a

25–27. Not satisfied with the selection of artists to be members of the Academy.

28. In some cases the selection of pictures has been injudicious, but this a matter of small importance; the main point is how the pictures that are admitted are to be best seen.

29, 30. In favour of an educational test for candidates for admission into the Academy.

31. And of professors of art at the Universities.

32, 33. Causes of the want of refinement observable in many modern pictures; the large prices they fetch harmful.

34. Teaching by visitors constantly changing mischievous.

36. How a picture should be hung.

37. An ill-worked picture ought not to be admitted by the Academy.

38. Bearing of this last opinion upon the present Exhibition.

42–44. Would have works of sculpture placed permanently in the painting-room, but not any of those sent in for the Exhibition of the year.

48. In favour of the present honorary members being made of use in their positions.[1]

53. Desirable that Government grants should be made to obtain for the pupils of the Academy beautiful examples of every kind of art.

56, 57. In favour of separate exhibitions of the works of Associates (or Graduates) and Academicians.

58–60. In favour of art-fellowships, but not of a fixed school in connection with the Academy at Rome.

61, 62. Comparison of the French and English systems (as regards assistance from pupils) in the production of great public paintings.

63. How the works of the Italian masters were executed.—Desirable that pupils should be trained to assist great masters in public works.]

[1] [Here, *On the Old Road* (both editions) inserted the words: "Introduction of laymen into the Academy deprecated under present circumstances, and why.—Present feeling towards art and artists at the Universities."]

Digitized by Google

personal interest in the question; that each might be striving for his own admission to that distinction; whereas, when the election takes place among those who have already attained that distinction, direct personal interest at all events is absent?—I should think personal interest would act in a certain sense in either case; it would branch into too many subtleties of interest to say in what way it would act. I should think that it would be more important to the inferior body to decide rightly upon those who were to govern them, than to the superior body to decide upon those who were to govern other people; and that the superior body would therefore generally choose those who were likely to be pleasant to themselves;—pleasant, either as companions, or in carrying out a system which they chose for their own convenience to adopt; while the inferior body would choose men likely to carry out the system that would tend most to the general progress of art.

6. As I understand you, though you have a decided opinion that it would be better for some other constituent body to elect the members of the Royal Academy, you have not a decided opinion as to how that constituent body would best be composed?—By no means.

7. I presume you would wish that constituent body to consist of artists, though you are not prepared to say precisely how they should be selected?—I should like the constituent body to consist both of artists and of the public. I feel great difficulties in offering any suggestion as to the manner in which the electors should elect: but I should like the public as well as artists to have a voice, so that we might have the public feeling brought to bear upon painting as we have now upon music; and that the election of those who were to attract the public eye, or direct the public mind, should indicate also the will of the public in some respects; not that I think that "will" always wise, but I think you would then have pointed out in what way those who are teaching the public should best regulate the teaching; and also it would give the public itself an interest in art, and a sense of responsibility, which in the present state of things they never can have.

8. Will you explain more fully the precedent of music to which you have just adverted?—The fame of any great singer or any great musician depends upon the public enthusiasm and feeling respecting him. No Royal Academy can draw a large audience to the opera by stating that such and such a piece of music is good, or that such and such a voice is clear; if the public do not feel the voice to be delicious, and if they do not like the music, they will not go to hear it. The fame of the musician, whether singer, instrumentalist, or composer, is founded mainly upon his having produced a strong effect upon the public intellect and imagination. I should like that same effect to be produced by painters, and to be expressed by the public enthusiasm and approbation; not merely by expressions of approbation in conversation, but by the actual voice which in the theatre is given by the shout and by the clapping of the hands. You cannot clap a picture, nor clap a painter at his work, but I should like the public in some way to bring their voice to bear upon the painter's work.

9. Have you formed any opinion upon the position of the Associates in the Royal Academy?—I have thought of it a little, but the present system

Digitized by Google

of the Academy is to me so entirely nugatory, it produces so little effect in any way (what little effect it does produce being in my opinion mischievous), that it has never interested me; and I have felt the difficulty so greatly, that I never, till your lordship's letter reached me, paid much attention to it. I always thought it would be a waste of time to give much time to thinking how it might be altered; so that as to the position of Associates I can say little, except that I think, in any case, there ought to be some period of probation, and some advanced scale of dignity, indicative of the highest attainments in art, which should be only given to the oldest and most practised painters.

10. From the great knowledge which you possess of British art, looking to the most eminent painters, sculptors, and architects at this time, should you say that the number of the Royal Academy is sufficient fully to represent them, or would you recommend an increase in the present number of Academicians?—I have not considered in what proportion the Academicianships at present exist. That is rather a question bearing upon the degree of dignity which one would be glad to confer. I should like the highest dignity to be limited, but I should like the inferior dignity corresponding to the Associateship to be given, as the degrees are given in the universities, without any limitation of number, to those possessing positive attainments and skill. I should think a very limited number of Academicianships would always meet all the requirements of the highest intellect of the country.

11. Have you formed any opinion upon the expediency of entrusting laymen with some share in the management of the affairs of the Academy?—No, I have formed no opinion upon that matter. I do not know what there is at present to be managed in the Academy. I should think if the Academy is to become an available school, laymen cannot be joined in the management of that particular department. In matters of revenue, and in matters concerning the general interests and dignity of the Academy, they might be.

12. Should you think that non-professional persons would be fitly associated with artists in such questions as the selection and hanging of the pictures sent in for exhibition?—No, I think not.

13. Some persons have suggested that the president of the Academy should not always nor of necessity be himself an artist; should you approve of any system by which a gentleman of high social position, not an artist, was placed at the head of such a body as the Academy?—"Of such a body as the Academy," if I may be permitted to repeat your words, must of course have reference to the constitution to be given to it. As at present constituted, I do not know what advantage might or might not be derived from such a gentleman being appointed president. As I should like to see it constituted, I think he ought to be an artist only.

14. Have you had any reason to observe or to make yourself acquainted with the working of the schools of the Royal Academy?—Yes, I have observed it. I have not made myself acquainted with the actual methods of teaching at present in use, but I know the general effect upon the art of the country.

15. What should you say was that effect?—Nearly nugatory: exceedingly painful in this respect, that the teaching of the Academy separates, as

Digitized by Google

the whole idea of the country separates, the notion of art-education from other education, and when you have made that one fundamental mistake, all others follow. You teach a young man to manage his chalk and his brush—not always that—but having done that, you suppose you have made a painter of him; whereas to educate a painter is the same thing as to educate a clergyman or a physician—you must give him a liberal education primarily, and that must be connected with the kind of learning peculiarly fit for his profession. That error is partly owing to our excessively vulgar and excessively shallow English idea that the artist's profession is not, and cannot be, a liberal one. We respect a physician, and call him a gentleman, because he can give us a purge and clean out our stomachs; but we do not call an artist a gentleman, whom we expect to invent for us the face of Christ. When we have made that primary mistake, all other mistakes in education are trivial in comparison. The very notion of an art academy should be, a body of teachers of the youth who are to be the guides of the nation through its senses; and that is a very important means of guiding it. We have done a good deal through dinners, but we may some day do a good deal more through pictures.

16. You would have a more comprehensive system of teaching?—Much more comprehensive.

17. Do I rightly understand you that you would wish it to embrace branches of liberal education in general, and not be merely confined to specific artistic studies?—Certainly. I would have the Academy education corresponding wholly to the university education. The schools of the country ought to teach the boy the first conditions of manipulation. He should come up, I say not at what age, but probably at about fourteen or fifteen, to the central university of art, wherever that was established; and then, while he was taught to paint and to carve and to work in metal—just as in old times he would have been taught to manage the sword and lance, they being the principal business of his life,—during the years from fifteen to twenty, the chief attention of his governors should be to make a gentleman of him in the highest sense; and to give him an exceedingly broad and liberal education, which should enable him not only to work nobly, but to conceive nobly.

18. As to the point, however, of artistic manipulation, is not it the fact that many great painters have differed, and do differ, from each other, and would it therefore be easy for the Academy to adopt any authoritative system of teaching, excluding one mode and acknowledging another?—Not easy, but very necessary. There have been many methods; but there has never been a case of a great school which did not fix upon its method: and there has been no case of a thoroughly great school which did not fix upon the right method, as far as circumstances enabled it to do so.[1] The meaning of a successful school is, that it has adopted a method which it teaches to its young painters, so that right working becomes a habit with them; so that with no thought, and no effort, and no torment, and no talk about it, they have the habit of doing what their school teaches them.

19. You do not think a system is equally good which leaves to each eminent professor, according to the bent of his genius or the result of his

[1] [On the deficiencies of the Academy's teaching in this respect, compare Vol. XII p. 253 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

experience, to instruct young men, the instruction varying with the character of each professor?—Great benefit would arise if each professor founded his own school, and were interested in his own pupils; but, as has been sufficiently illustrated in the schools of Domenichino and Guido, there is apt to arise rivalry between the masters, with no correlative advantages, unless the masters are all of one mind. And the only successful idea of an academy has been where the practice was consistent, and where there was no contradiction. Considering the knowledge we now have, and the means we now have of comparing all the works of the greatest painters, though, as you suggest by your question, it is not easy to adopt an authoritative system, yet it is perfectly possible. Let us get at the best method and let us teach that. There is unquestionably a best way if we can find it; and we have now in England the means of finding it out.

20. The teaching in the Academy is now, under all circumstances, gratuitous; would you wish that system to continue, or should you prefer to see a system of payment?—I am not prepared to answer that question. It would depend upon the sort of system that was adopted and on the kind of persons you received into your schools.

21. I presume you would say that in artistic teaching there are some points on which there would be common ground, and others upon which there must be specific teaching; for instance, in sculpture and painting there is a point up to which the proportions of the human figure have to be studied, but afterwards there is a divergence between the two arts of chiselling marble and laying colours on the canvas?—Certainly. I should think all that might be arranged in an Academy system very simply. You would have first your teaching of drawing with the soft point; and associated with that, chiaroscuro: you would then have the teaching of drawing with the hard or black point, involving the teaching of the best system of engraving, and all that was necessary to form your school of engravers: you would then proceed to metal work; and on working in metal you would found your school of sculpture, and on that your school of architecture: and finally, and above all, you would have your school of painting, including oil painting and fresco painting, and all painting in permanent material; (not comprising painting in any material that was not permanent:) and with that you would associate your school of chemistry, which should teach what was permanent and what was not; which school of chemistry should declare authoritatively, with the Academy's seal, what colours would stand and what process would secure their standing: and should have a sort of Apothecaries' Hall where anybody who required them could procure colours in the purest state; all these things being organised in one great system, and only possibly right by their connexion and in their connexion.

22. Do you approve of the encouragement which of late years has been given to fresco painting, and do you look forward to much extension of that branch of art in England?—I found when I was examining the term "fresco painting," that it was a wide one, that none of us seemed to know quite the limitation or extent of it; and after giving a good deal more time to the question I am still less able to answer distinctly on an understanding of the term "fresco painting": but using the term "decorative painting, applicable to walls in permanent materials," I think it essential that every

Digitized by Google

great school should include as one of its main objects the teaching of wall painting in permanent materials, and on a large scale.

23. You think it should form a branch of the system of teaching in the Academy?—I think it should form a branch of the teaching in the Academy, possibly the principal branch.

24. Does it, so far as you know, form a separate branch of teaching in any of the foreign academies?—I do not know.

25. Looking generally, and of course without mentioning any names, have you in the course of the last few years been generally satisfied with the selection of artists into the Royal Academy?—No, certainly not.

26. Do you think that some artists of merit have been excluded, or that artists whom you think not deserving of that honour have been elected?—More that artists not deserving of the honour have been elected. I think it does no harm to any promising artist to be left out of the Academy, but it does harm to the public sometimes that an unpromising artist should be let into it.

27. You think there have been cases within the last few years in which persons, in your judgment, not entitled to that distinction have nevertheless been elected?—Certainly.

28. With respect to the selection of pictures for the exhibition, are you satisfied in general with that selection, or have you in particular instances seen ground to think that it has been injudiciously exercised?—In some cases it has been injudiciously exercised, but it is a matter of small importance; it causes heartburning probably, but little more. If a rejected picture is good, the public will see it some day or other, and find out that it is a good picture. I care little about what pictures are let in or not, but I do care about seeing the pictures that are let in. The main point, which every one would desire to see determined, is how the pictures that are admitted are to be best seen. No picture deserving of being seen at all should be so hung as to give you any pain or fatigue in seeing it. If you let a picture into the room at all, it should not be hung so high as that either the feelings of the artist or the neck of the public should be hurt.

29. (*Viscount Hardinge.*) I gather from your evidence that you would wish to see the Royal Academy a sort of central university to which young men from other institutions should be sent. Assuming that there were difficulties in the way of carrying that out, do you think, under the present system, you could exact from young men who are candidates for admission into the Royal Academy, some educational test?—Certainly; I think much depends upon that. If the system of education which I have been endeavouring to point out were adopted, you would have in every one of those professions very practised workmen. You could not have any of this education carried out, unless you had thoroughly practised workmen; and you should fix your pass as you fix your university pass, and you should pass a man in architecture, sculpture, and painting, because he knows his business, and knows as much of any other science as is necessary for his profession. You require a piece of work from him, and you examine him, and then you pass him,—call him whatever you like;—but you say to the public, Here is a workman in this branch who will do your work well.

30. You do not think there would in such a system be any risk of excluding men who might hereafter be great men, who under such a system

Digitized by Google

might not be able to pass?—There are risks in every system, but I think every man worth anything would pass. A great many who would be good for nothing would pass, but your really great man would assuredly pass.

31. Has it ever struck you that it would be advantageous to art if there were at the universities professors of art who might give lectures and give instruction to young men who might desire to avail themselves of it, as you have lectures on botany and geology?—Yes, assuredly. The want of interest on the part of the upper classes in art has been very much at the bottom of the abuses which have crept into all systems of education connected with it. If the upper classes could only be interested in it by being led into it when young, a great improvement might be looked for; therefore I feel the expediency of such an addition to the education of our universities.

32. Is not that want of refinement which may be observed in many of the pictures from time to time exhibited in the Royal Academy to be attributed in a great measure to the want of education amongst artists?—It is to be attributed to that, and to the necessity which artists are under of addressing a low class of spectators: an artist to live must catch the public eye. Our upper classes supply a very small amount of patronage to artists at present, their main patronage being from the manufacturing districts and from the public interested in engravings;—an exceedingly wide sphere, but a low sphere,—and you catch the eye of that class much more by pictures having reference to their amusements than by any noble subject better treated, and the better treated it was the less it would interest that class.

33. Is it not often the case that pictures exhibiting such a want of refinement, at the same time fetch large prices amongst what I may call the mercantile patrons of art?—Certainly; and, the larger the price, the more harm done of course to the school, for that is a form of education you cannot resist. Plato said long ago, when you have your demagogue against you no human form of education can resist that.[1]

34. (*Sir E. Head.*) What is your opinion of the present mode of teaching in the life school and the painting school, namely, by visitors constantly changing?—I should think it mischievous. The unfortunate youths, I should imagine, would just get what they could pick up; it would be throwing them crumbs very much as you throw bones to the animals in the Zoological Gardens.

35. Do you conceive that anything which can be properly called a school, is likely to be formed where the teaching is conducted in that way?—Assuredly not.

36. You stated that in the event of the introduction of lay members into the Academy, you would not think it desirable that they should take part in the selection or hanging of pictures for exhibition. Is not there a great distinction between the selection of the pictures and the hanging of the pictures, and might not they take part in the one without taking part in the other?—I should think hardly. My notion of hanging a picture

[1] [The reference seems to be to Plato's *Republic*, viii. 563, where it is said that under democracy "the master fears and flatters his scholars, and the scholars despise their masters and tutors; and in general young and old are alike," etc.]

Digitized by Google

is to put it low enough to be seen. If small it should be placed near the eye. Anybody can hang a picture, but the question should be, is there good painting enough in this picture to make it acceptable to the public, or to make it just to the artist to show it? And none but artists can quite judge of the workmanship which should entitle it to enter the Academy.

37. Do you think it depends solely upon the workmanship?—Not by any means solely, but I think that is the first point that should be looked to. An ill-worked picture ought not to be admitted; let it be exhibited elsewhere if you will, but your Academy has no business to let bad work pass. If a man cannot carve or paint, though his work may be well conceived, do not let his work pass.[1] Unless you require good work in your Academy exhibition, you can form no school.

38. (*Mr. Reeve.*) Applying the rule you have just laid down, would the effect be to exclude a considerable proportion of the works now exhibited in the Academy?—Yes; more of the Academicians' than of others.

39. (*Sir E. Head.*) Selection now being made by technical artists?—No. Professional?—Yes.

40. (*Lord Elcho.*) Do you think that none but professional artists are capable of judging of the actual merit or demerit of a painting?—Non-professional persons may offer a very strong opinion upon the subject, which may happen to be right,—or which may be wrong.

41. Your opinion is that the main thing with respect to the exhibition is, that the pictures should be seen; that they should not be hung too high or too low. That question has been already raised before the Commission, and it has been suggested that two feet from the ground should be the minimum height for the base of the picture, and some witnesses have said that six feet and others eight feet should be the maximum height for the base of the picture; what limit would you fix?—I should say that the horizontal line in the perspective of the picture ought always to be opposite the spectator's eye, no matter what the height may be from the floor. If the horizontal line is so placed that it must be above the spectator's eye, in consequence of the size of the picture, it cannot be helped, but I would always get the horizontal line opposite the eye if possible.

42. (*Chairman.*) Should you concur in the suggestion which a witness[2] has made before this Commission, that it would be an improvement, if the space admitted of it, that works of sculpture should be intermixed in the same apartment with works of painting, instead of being kept as at present in separate apartments?—I should think it would be very delightful to have some works of sculpture mixed with works of painting; that it would make the exhibition more pleasing, and that the eye would be rested sometimes by turning from the colours to the marble, and would see the colours of the paintings better in return. Sir Joshua Reynolds mentions the power which some of the Flemish pictures seemed to derive, in his opinion, by looking at them after having consulted his note-book.[3] Statuary placed among the

[1] [On this subject, see above, Introduction, p. xxvi.]

[2] [The witness was Ruskin's friend, Edmund Oldfield, who submitted a letter on the subject to the Commission (see pp. 439–440 of the Report).]

[3] [Reynolds made this observation in connexion with his second visit to the Netherlands. "On viewing the works of Rubens a second time, they appeared to

Digitized by Google

pictures would have the same effect. I would not have the sculpture that was sent in for the exhibition of the year exhibited with the paintings, but I would have works of sculpture placed permanently in the painting rooms.[1]

43. (*Lord Elcho.*) Supposing there were no works of sculpture available for being placed in the rooms permanently, and supposing among the works sent in for annual exhibition there were works of a character fit to be placed among the paintings, should you see any objection to their being so placed? — That would cause an immense amount of useless trouble, and perpetual quarrels among the sculptors, as to whose works were entitled to be placed in the painting rooms or not.

44. Are you aware that in the exhibition in Paris in 1855, that was the system adopted? — No. If the French adopted it, it was likely to be useful, and doubtless they would carry it out very cleverly; but we have not the knack of putting the right things in the right places by any means.

45. Did you see our own International Exhibition last year?—No.

46. Are you aware that a similar system was resorted to in the exhibition of pictures there?—I should think in our exhibitions we must put anything where it would go, in the sort of way that we manage them.

47. At the present moment there are on the books of the Academy five honorary members, who hold certain titular offices, Earl Stanhope being antiquary to the Academy, Mr. Grote being professor of ancient history, Dean Milman being professor of ancient literature, the Bishop of Oxford being chaplain, and Sir Henry Holland being secretary for foreign correspondence; these professors never deliver any lectures and have no voice whatever in the management, but have mere honorary titular distinctions; should you think it desirable that gentlemen of their position and character should have a voice in the management of the affairs of the Academy? — It would be much more desirable that they should give lectures upon the subjects with which they are acquainted. I should think Earl Stanhope and all the gentlemen you have mentioned, would be much happier in feeling that they were of use in their positions; and that if you gave them something to do they would very nobly do it. If you give them nothing to do I think they ought not to remain in the institution.

48. It has been suggested that the Academy now consisting of forty-two might be increased advantageously to fifty professional members, architecture, sculpture, and painting being fairly represented, and that in addition to those fifty there might be elected or nominated somehow or other ten non-professional persons, that is, men taking an interest in art, who had a certain position and standing in the country, and who might take an active

him much colder in tone than on the former occasion, and he could not at first account for this circumstance; 'but he afterwards recollected,' says Mr. Malone, 'that when he first saw them he had his note-book in his hand, for the purpose of writing down short remarks, and imagined that as the eye passed quickly from the paper to the pictures, the colours derived a greater degree of richness and warmth from the contrast than they subsequently appeared to possess when viewed without this foil'" ("Memoir of Sir Joshua Reynolds," prefixed to the edition of his *Literary Works*, by H. W. Beechey, vol. i. p. 242: Bohn's ed., 1852).]

[1] [On this subject, compare Ruskin's evidence to the National Gallery Commission in 1857, Vol. XIII. pp. 539, 540.]

Digitized by Google

part in the management of the affairs of the institution, so tending to bring the Royal Academy and the public together?—I do not know enough of society to be able to form an opinion upon the subject.

49. Irrespective of society, as a question of art, you know enough of non-professional persons interested in art to judge as to whether the infusion of such an element into the Academy might be of advantage to the Academy and to art generally?—I think if you educate our upper classes to take more interest in art, which implies, of course, to know something about it, they might be most efficient members of the Academy; but if you leave them, as you leave them now, to the education which they get at Oxford and Cambridge, and give them the sort of scorn which all the teaching there tends to give, for art and artists, the less they have to do with an academy of art the better.

50. Assuming that, at present, you have not a very great number of those persons in the country, do you not think that the mere fact of the adoption of such a principle in any reform in the constitution of the Academy might have the effect of turning attention more to this matter at the Universities, and leading to the very thing which you think so desirable?—No, I should think not. It would only at present give the impression that the whole system was somewhat artificial, and that it was to remain ineffective.

51. Notwithstanding the neglect of this matter at the Universities, do you think, at the present moment, you could not find ten non-professional persons, of the character you would think desirable, to add to the Academy?—If I may be so impertinent, I may say that you as one of the upper classes, and I as a layman in the lower classes, are tolerably fair examples of the kind of persons who take an interest in art, and I think both of us would do a great deal of mischief if we had much to do with the Academy.

52. Assuming those two persons to be appointed lay members, will you state in what way you think they would do mischief in the councils of the Academy?—We should be disturbing elements, whereas what I should try to secure, if I had anything to do with its arrangements, would be entire tranquillity, a regular system of tuition in which there should be little excitement, and little operation of popular, aristocratic, or any other disturbing influence; none of criticism, and therefore none of tiresome people like myself;—none of money patronage, or even of aristocratic patronage. The whole aim of the teachers should be to produce work which could be demonstrably shown to be good and useful, and worthy of being bought, or used in any way; and after that the whole question of patronage and interest should be settled. The school should teach its art-grammar thoroughly in everything, and in every material, and should teach it carefully; and that could be done if a perfect system were adopted, and above all, if a few thoroughly good examples were put before the students. That is a point which I think of very great importance. I think it very desirable that grants should be made by the Government to obtain for the pupils of the Academy beautiful examples of every kind, the very loveliest and best; not too many; and that their minds should not be confused by having placed before them examples of all schools and times; they are confused enough by what they see in the shops, and in the annual exhibitions. Let engraving be taught by Marc Antonio and Albert Dürer,—painting by Giorgione, Paul Veronese, Titian and Velasquez,—and sculpture

Digitized by Google

by good Greek and selected Roman examples, and let there be no question of other schools or their merits. Let those things be shown as good and right, and let the student be trained in those principles:—if afterwards he strikes out an original path, let him; but do not let him torment himself and other people with his originalities, till he knows what is right, so far as is known at present.

53. You are opposed, on the whole, to the introduction of the lay element?—Yes; but I am opposed strongly or distinctly to it, because I have not knowledge enough of society to know how it would work.

54. Your not being in favour of it results from your belief that the lay element that would be useful to the Academy does not at present exist in this country; but you think, if it did exist, and if it could be made to grow out of our schools and universities by art teaching, it might, with advantage to the Academy and to artists, be introduced into the Academy?—Yes.

55. Supposing the class of Royal Academicians to be retained, and that you had fifty Royal Academicians, should you think it desirable that their works should be exhibited by themselves, so that the public might see together the works of those considered to be the first artists of this country?—Certainly, I should like all pictures to be well seen, but I should like one department of the exhibition to be given to the Associates or Graduates. I use that term because I suppose those Associates to have a degree given them for a certain amount of excellence, and any person who had attained that degree should be allowed to send in so many pictures. Then the pictures sent in by persons who had attained the higher honour of Royal Academician should be separately exhibited.

56. That would act as a stimulus to them to keep up their position and show themselves worthy of the honour?—Yes. I do not think they ought to be mixed at all as they are now.

57. What is your opinion with reference to the present system of travelling studentships?—I think it might be made very useful indeed.

58. On the one hand it has been suggested that there should be, as is the system adopted by the French Academy, a permanent professor at Rome to look after the students; on the other hand it has been said that it is not desirable, if you have those travelling studentships, that the students should go to Rome, that it is better for them to travel, and to go to Venice or Lombardy, and to have no fixed school in connexion with the Academy at Rome. To which of those two systems do you give the preference?—I should prefer the latter; if a man goes to travel, he ought to travel, and not be plagued with schools.

59. It has been suggested that fellowships might be given to rising artists, pecuniary assistance being attached to those fellowships, the artist being required annually to send in some specimen of his work to show what he was doing, but it being left optional with him to go abroad or to work at home; should you think that would be desirable, or as has been suggested in a letter by Mr. Armitage,[1] supposing those fellowships to be established for four years, that two of those years should be spent abroad and two at home?—Without entering into any detail as to whether two

[1] [Edward Armitage, R.A., for whom see above, p. 268. His letter, together with a Draft Proposal for the Reform of the Academy, are at pp. 64, 65 of the Report.]

Digitized by Google

years should be spent abroad and two years at home, I feel very strongly that one of the most dangerous and retarding influences you have operating upon art is the enormous power of money, and the chances of entirely winning or entirely losing, that is, of making your fortune in a year by a large taking picture, or else starving for ten years by very good small ones. The whole life of an artist is a lottery, and a very wild lottery, and the best artist is liable to be warped away from what he knows is right by the chance of at once making a vast fortune by catching the public eye, the public eye being only to be caught by bright colours and certain conditions of art not always desirable. If, therefore, connected with the Academy schools there could be the means of giving a fixed amount of income to certain men, who would as a consideration for that income furnish a certain number of works that might be agreed upon, or undertake any national work that might be agreed upon, that I believe would be the healthiest way in which a good painter could be paid. To give him his bread and cheese, and so much a day, and say, Here are such and such things we want you to do, is, I believe, the healthiest, simplest, and happiest way in which great work can be produced. But whether it is compatible with our present system I cannot say, nor whether every man would not run away as soon as he found he could get two or three thousand pounds by painting a catching picture. I think your best men would not.

60. You would be in favour of those fellowships?—Yes.

61. I gather that you are in favour of the encouragement of mural decoration, fresco painting, and so forth. The system that prevails abroad, in France, for instance, is for painters to employ pupils to work under them. It was in that way that Delaroche painted his hemicycle at the Académie des Beaux-Arts,[1] employing four pupils, who worked for him, and who from his small sketch drew the full-sized picture on the walls, which was subsequently corrected by him. They then coloured it up to his sketch, after which he shut himself up again, and completed it. On the other hand, if you go to the Victoria Gallery in the House of Lords, you find Mr. Maclise at work on a space of wall forty-eight feet long, painting the Death of Nelson on the deck of the *Victory*, every figure being life size, the deck of the ship and the ropes and everything being the actual size, and you see him painting with his own hand each little bit of rope and the minutest detail.[2] Which of the two systems do you think is the soundest and most calculated to produce great and noble work?—The first is the best for the pupils, the other is the best for the public. But unquestionably not only can a great work be executed as Mr. Maclise is executing his, but no really great work was executed otherwise, for in all mighty work, whether in fresco or oil, every touch and hue of colour to the last corner has been put on lovingly by the painter's own hand, not leaving to a pupil to paint so much as a pebble under a horse's foot.

62. Do you believe that most of the works of the great masters in Italy

[1] [On this encaustic painting, representing celebrated artists of all ages and nations and containing seventy-five colossal figures, Delaroche and his assistants were employed for three and a half years. Among his assistants was Mr. Armitage, who (in the letter mentioned in the preceding note) gives an interesting account of their manner of work.]

[2] [See above, p. 473.]

Digitized by Google

were so executed?—No; because the pupils were nearly as mighty as the masters. Great men took such an interest in their work, and they were so modest and simple that they were repeatedly sacrificing themselves to the interests of their religion or of the society they were working for; and when a thing was to be done in a certain time it could only be done by bringing in aid; but whenever precious work was to be done, then the great man said, "Lock me up here by myself, give me a little wine and cheese, and come in a month, and I will show you what I have done."

63. Do you think it desirable that the pupils should be so trained as to be capable of assisting great masters in such works?—Assuredly.

Digitized by Google

VII

MODERN CARICATURE[1]

(1883, 1888)

1. A LETTER ADDRESSED TO FRANZ GOEDECKER[2]

BRANTWOOD, *March 28th*, 1883.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am greatly interested by the photographs you have sent me from your very clever drawings, but they are to me anything but "jokes." I see no matter of merriment either in the weakness of age or the abortions of vulgar form; and I sincerely hope that you will not waste your real powers in pandering to the malice or the stupidity of those people who *do*. If you add to your present gift of seizing grotesque or abnormal character the skill proper to a painter, you might take a position of most useful influence in representing the evils and dangers of our great cities and manufactories: and you might win for yourself such an honourable fame as that of Hogarth, instead of the momentary praise of amusing the idleness of evening parties.

Believe me, faithfully yours,
JOHN RUSKIN.

2. "THE IRISH GREEN BOOK"[3]

SANDGATE, *January* 13, 1888.

SIR,—I am extremely obliged by your having sent me the "Green Book," as it informs me of things which I am unable, in the time at my disposal, to ascertain; and cannot venture, until some evidence like this

[1] [On the subject of caricature generally, compare Appendix i. in *Modern Painters*, vol. iv. (Vol. VI. pp. 469–474).]

[2] [The "Goe" of *Vanity Fair*. The letter was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of January 18, 1888 (4th ed.), and again in that of January 23, 1890. It was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, 1890, vol. i. p. 214, and in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, 1890, i. 32.]

[3] [A small book of political caricatures, ridiculing the Parnell-Gladstone alliance, published by William Blackwood & Sons (December 1887). The caricatures and letterpress were by Mr. G. R. Halkett, afterwards a contributor of caricatures to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and editor of the *Pall Mall Magazine*. The letter was printed in the *St. James's Gazette*, January 18, 1888, and in the *Daily Telegraph* on the following day. It was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, 1890, vol. ii. p. 14, and in the privately-issued *Ruskiniana*, 1890, i. 74.]

Digitized by Google

comes of their being matter of common notoriety, to imagine. The caricatures are far more powerful and less gross than those of the old English school, and I suppose art of this kind to be the only means of making a vivid impression on some orders of the populace. But it assuredly, at the same time, depraves their tastes and destroys their respect, not only for the persons held up to their reprobation, but for all governments and for all human speech or face or form; while the work itself, though, as I said, in its kind powerful, is without essential value or any skill which, after it has answered its momentary purpose, would render it deserving of preservation. I deeply regret, in this and all like instances, the tone given to political statement and debate, by making an ugly jest of falsehood or a light one of crime, which should be punished by the nation's sorrow in its anger—not by its satire, still less left unpunished by its contempt.

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

Digitized by Google

VIII

THE ART OF MEZZOTINT[1]

(1884)

"MR. RUSKIN in 'gratefully accepting' the dedication of Mr. Seymour Haden's mezzotint of Turner's mezzotint of Turner's 'Calais Pier,' has written to express his delight at the eminent etcher's attempt to revive that beautiful art. Mezzotint, says Mr. Ruskin, is the only satisfactory way in which Turner's pictures can be rendered in chiaro-oscuro. This being so, it would be well, if for no other reason, that the art should be maintained; but seeing that the demand for artistic reproductions has increased a hundredfold during the last quarter of a century, it is more than doubtful if the more rapidly executed and cheaper processes will allow of the continued existence of the fastidious and more costly method of free-hand mezzotinting. In all probability, unless some artist should arise, impelled, like Mr. Seymour Haden, by love of art without reference to gain, mezzotint will be permitted to drop out of the list of engraver's methods altogether."

[1] [From the *Pall Mall Gazette* of July 31, 1884. It is not clear how far the writer was quoting the words of Ruskin's letter. In connexion with what Ruskin says of mezzotint as the only satisfactory way of rendering Turner, compare Vol. XIII. p. 382; where, in saying that the *Rivers* were "skilfully engraved, but only in mezzotint," Ruskin meant not to disparage the process but to indicate that there were not in that case, as in the *Liber*, etchings as well. The plate here referred to, by Mr. (now Sir) Seymour Haden (the well-known surgeon and Founder and President of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers), is from the painting by Turner in the National Gallery (No. 472). It is No. 140 in Sir W. R. Drake's *Descriptive Catalogue of the Etched Work of Francis Seymour Haden* (1880), and D. 140 in the *Supplement* to that work by H. N. Harrington (1903).]

Digitized by Google

IX

THE NUDE IN ART

(1885)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *PALL MALL GAZETTE*[1]

SIR,—I did not see till yesterday the reference made to me in the third page of your yesterday's issue. The passages quoted by your correspondent are not only consistent but, being written in both instances with great care, contain all I should have wished to say on the subject, had not private appeals to me by art students compelled me to point out that the works in question could have attracted no attention but by their impropriety; and seem to have been expressly executed to prove the applicability to the ordinary British artist of the remark made on Bewick in *Ariadne Florentina*,

[1] [Of June 1, 1885. The letter was headed "A Genuine Letter of Mr. Ruskin's," the reference being to a letter, immediately preceding it in the column, in which his solicitors, Messrs. Tarrant and Mackerell, warned the public against buying letters purporting to be by him, as a manufactory had been discovered from which 280 forged letters had recently been issued.

The letter of Ruskin refers to a discussion which occupied much space in the newspapers of the time on certain pictures in the Academy and Grosvenor Gallery of 1885. It was started in the *Times* of May 20 by a letter signed "British Matron" making "public remonstrance against the display of nudity at the two principal galleries of modern art in London." A weightier letter appeared on May 25 signed "H." (now well understood to have been written by the late J. C. Horsley, R.A.), in which, while dissociating himself from the extreme views of "British Matron," he regretted the tendency to depart from the ideal treatment of the nude, and to throw over "certain special artistic conventions as old as Praxiteles." The discussion was taken up in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which on May 27 published a letter citing Ruskin's cautions against the study of the nude in *Eagle's Nest* (§§ 164–167). On the following day another correspondent cited, on the other hand, *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. (Vol. IV. pp. 194–195), where Ruskin praises the noble nude of Giorgione. Upon this letter the editorial remark was made that there was no inconsistency between the two passages, and Ruskin himself was invited to intervene in the discussion. To that appeal he responded in the letter printed above. At a later date (October 15, 1885) the *Pall Mall Gazette* published a letter signed "K. B.," who, "as an old art student," had some years ago written to Ruskin to resolve his perplexities on the subject of studying from the female nude: "while my religious convictions seemed to forbid it, I was assured on the other hand that it was a necessity." Ruskin replied, "Of course you can do without it, and do much better than with it."]

Digitized by Google

that "he could paint a pig, but not a Venus."[1] For the rest, the British public cannot but feel that these pictures have been enough condemned by the tone of the letters and articles written in their defence.[2] The recent phrenzies of dissection and exposure in science and art are, indeed, merely opposite poles of one and the same rage—substituting, in classic thought, for the noble sorrow—*non te restituet pietas*[3]—the ignoble hope—*restituet impietas*; and, in Christian thought, for ancient Madonna worship—insult alike to the Matron and the Child.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

HERNE HILL, *May* 31.

[1] [*Ariadne*, § 154, and compare *Art of England*, § 196.]

[2] [Among the letters in the *Times* was one (May 21) from an A.R.A. (since deceased), of which the taste may be judged from the following extract. Whence, he asked, does the shame of "British Matron" arise? "Is it the shame of modesty—so sad to think how hopelessly less beautiful her own figure is than that in the lovely picture which enchants her masculine friend? Or is it the noble shame of indignation that the miserable painter should so meanly conceive and so shabbily represent those charms on which her power in the world may be supposed to depend?" It was of this letter, as Ruskin explained at the time to one of the editors, that he was here thinking.]

[3] [Horace: *Odes*, iv. 7, 23.]

Digitized by Google

X

NOTES ON MILLAIS

(1886)

[From *Notes on Some of the Principal Pictures of Sir John Everett Millais, exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery*, 1886. This catalogue, compiled by Mr. A. Gordon Crawford—a pseudonym for Mr. A. G. Wise—consisted, for the most part, of Ruskin's already published criticisms. The "Editor's Note" contained the remark by Ruskin which is cited above, p. xxi. Ruskin added, however, some words of preface (his signature being given in facsimile), and a few new notes. One of these has already been given: see above, p. 293 *n*. The others are here collected:—]

"PREFACE.—The permission given to the compiler of the following catalogue to insert pieces of my former criticism in it was given in the hope that some of the fragments might add interest to the most important exhibition of English art yet held in this country; but having no time to read the proofs of the catalogue itself, I must in the outset broadly efface any impression that may be given by it of my criticisms having been of any service to the Pre-Raphaelite school, except in protecting it against vulgar outcry.[1] The painters themselves rightly resented the idea of misjudging friends that I was either their precursor or their guide; they were entirely original in their thoughts, and independent in their practice. Rossetti, I fear, even exaggerated his colour because I told him it was too violent; and to this very day my love of Turner dims Mr. Burne-Jones's pleasure in my praise.—JOHN RUSKIN, Brantwood, 22nd Jan. 1886."

THE CARPENTER'S SHOP; OR, CHRIST IN THE HOUSE OF HIS PARENTS. (1850.)

[The compiler of the catalogue had written, "Here the story implants itself at once as true." Ruskin appended a footnote:—]

"It does nothing of the sort, and the picture is only an elementary, and in many respects an extremely faultful example of the master's first manner.—J. R., 1886."[2]

[1] [See further on this subject, Introduction to Vol. XII. pp. xliii.–xlvii.]
[2] [For other notices of this picture, see above, pp. 111, 215, and Vol. XII. p. 320.]

Digitized by Google

MARIANA IN THE MOATED GRANGE. (1851.)

"The picture has always been a precious memory to me; but if the painter had painted Mariana at work in an unmoated grange, instead of idle in a moated one, it had been more to the purpose—whether of art or life.—J. R., 1886."[1]

THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE: "It might be done, and England should do it."[2] (1874.)

"I have not seen this picture, but it must be a glorious one, judging merely from the coloured print. But as for Passages, either North-West or South-East, if England would mind her business at home it would be the better for her.—J. R., 1886."

FOR THE SQUIRE.[3] (Grosvenor Gallery, 1882.)

"One of the most deep and pathetic renderings of expression among the painter's great works of this kind.—J. R., 1886."

THE ORNITHOLOGIST; OR, THE RULING PASSION.[4] (1885.)

"I have never seen any work of modern art with more delight and admiration than this.—J. R., 1886."[5]

[To the last passage cited by the compiler in the *Notes*, Ruskin appended the following passage :—]

"Looking back now on the painter's career—crowned as it has lately been by some of the best pieces of freehand painting in the world, I am more disposed to regret his never having given expression to his power of animal-painting, wholly unrivalled in its kind, than any of the shortcomings in his actual work.—J. R., 1886."

[1] [See also above, p. 107.]

[2] [Now in the Tate Gallery (No. 1509). The words are supposed to be uttered by the old sailor (painted from Trelawney) represented in the picture.]

[3] [A little girl holding a letter; the picture is in the collection of Mr. H. F. Makins.]

[4] [In the painter's possession at the time of his death. The principal figure was painted from Mr. Barlow, R.A., the engraver. The subject was suggested to Millais by a visit to John Gould, the famous ornithologist (see *Life and Letters of Millais*, ii. p. 169). One of the editors had a conversation with Ruskin on the picture shows of 1885 :—

> "There are only three things," he said, "worth looking at in them. One is Millais's big picture at the Academy—with the entirely noble old man and the noble young girl in front. The second is Briton Riviere's Stolen Kisses; and the third is a little drawing of Mrs. Allingham's at the Old Water-Colour Society. In all Millais's other pictures there is his scornful flinging of unfinished work; but there's never any denying his power. Whether he is good one year, or bad, he is always the most powerful of them all."]

[5] [For a note on Ruskin's successive references to Millais in *Academy Notes*, see above, p. 22 *n*. For general notices of the painter in Ruskin's earlier works, see Vol. XII. pp. 162, 319 *seq.*, 360, Vol. III. p. 621 *n.*, Vol. XI. pp. 36 *n.*, 229 *n.*, and *Giotto and his Works in Padua*, § 12. In addition to the Notes printed above, Ruskin published some notices of Millais's pictures of 1877; for these see *Fors Clavigera*, Letter 79; and in *The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism* (1878), § 4, he noticed "The Blind Girl," which was at the Academy in 1856.]

Digitized by Google

XI

PASSAGES FROM EXHIBITION CATALOGUES, ETC.

(1884–1892)

1

[*Catalogue of a Collection of Studies in Oil of The English Lake Country*, by the Hon. Stephen Coleridge, M.A., June 1891. London: The Dowdeswell Galleries, 160 New Bond Street. At p. 5 of the Introduction the writer "A. M." says: "As early as 1884 Mr. Ruskin, who saw some of these studies, wrote what the artist, in a letter to a friend, calls 'words of kindly instruction'":—]

"Fix your mind on skies, and give up everything for them at present—no study will reward you more, nor is any in so completely elementary a state. Give your young energy to it, and you will soon have wonderful things to tell and show the world. Wait quietly for *calm*, clear weather, quiet clouds, and distant ones, when they come, and read up all that is known of them, and go on."

2. SUTTON PALMER'S DRAWINGS[1] (1886)

The drawings are entirely praiseworthy, and in a kind which needs no praise from me, except the attestation that every scene is absolutely true to scale and form.

Mr. Sutton Palmer's sunshiny temper merits, better than mine, Carlyle's epithet—for me. He is really an "Ethereal" Palmer.[2]

[1] [From p. 1 of a *Catalogue of Drawings painted by Sutton Palmer during the past two years illustrating some of the beauties of the English Lake, now exhibiting at Dowdeswell and Dowdeswell's, 133 New Bond Street (Two Doors from the Grosvenor Gallery) 1887.* The extract was also on a circular issued by Messrs. Dowdeswell in 1887, headed "To Mr. C. W. Dowdeswell. Extract from Letter from Professor Ruskin, 19th November, 1886." The extract was reprinted in *Igdrasil*, June 1890, vol. i. pp. 212–213, and again in *Ruskiniana*, Part i. pp. 30–31.]

[2] [The allusion is to a copy of *The Early Kings of Norway*, presented by the author to Ruskin, with the following inscription:—

"To my dear and ethereal Ruskin, whom God preserve. Chelsea, 4th May, 1875. T. Carlyle."

The signature alone is in Carlyle's hand.]

Digitized by Google

I feel *myself* a little dull for want of cottages,—not to say shelterless for want of inns,—and I do think we ought to have had some grimmer crags, with possibilities of tumble off—or losing one's way.

In all Mr. Palmer's drawings one is led down to the lake, or by the river on velvet and down of grass and moss; one could travel such a country barefoot. I wish, by the way, that Scottish fashion would come in again!

With sincere thanks for sight of the drawings and compliments to the artist.

Yours, etc., etc.

3. A LETTER ON THOMAS GIRTIN[1] (1887)

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
16th January, 1887.

DEAR SIR,—I have the deepest and the fondest regard for your great-grandfather's work, holding it to be entirely authoritative and faultless as a type, not only of pure water-colour execution, but of pure artistic feeling and insight into what is noblest and capable of rendering dignity in familiar subjects. He is often as impressive to me as Nature herself, nor do I doubt that Turner owed more to his teaching and companionship than to his own genius in the first years of his life.

Believe me, your faithful servant,
J. RUSKIN.

4

[*Catalogue of a Collection of Water-Colour Drawings of Arthur Severn, R.I., with Prefatory Notes upon his work and upon the 100 Exhibitions held at the Fine Art Society's, 148 New Bond Street, London. 1892.* At pp. 3–5 of the Prefatory Note Mr. Arthur Severn writes:—]

"I am sorry that for this exhibition of mine I cannot get Ruskin to write something, but it is out of the question in his present state of health. Of course most of my friends would expect something from his hand, and if he had been well enough, I am sure he would have written me a preface, and a very interesting one too! as he would have been able to have some nice hits at some of us painters who go out of our way to paint atmospheric effects in London and elsewhere, produced by fog and smoke and gloom, and which suggest, what he considers mere squalor and the smoke which he hates. I remember once, many years ago, my showing him a large drawing I did from Manchester

[1] [This letter was addressed to Mr. Francis Pierrepoint Barnard. It first appeared at pp. 64–65 of *The Earlier English Water-Colour Painters*, by Cosmo Monkhouse, 1889. It was thence reprinted in *Igdrasil*, June 1890, vol. i. p. 213, and in *Ruskiniana*, Part i. p. 31. For Girtin (1773–1802), see Vol. V. p. 409, Vol. XII. p. 309 *n.*]

Digitized by Google

Buildings, close to Westminster Bridge, of St. Paul's at sunrise, looking across the river. He said, 'What a beastly subject!' I was rather surprised, and he saw that I felt it, for he at once took me by the arm and said, 'But, my dear Arthur, that little cloud is wonderfully true, and could not be better!' I fancy it was the great Shot Tower at Waterloo Bridge, and the Charing Cross railway bridge he could not stand.

"Years after, Albert Goodwin and I travelled with him through Italy and France. I think he rather learnt then that it is much better to let young artists do what they like best; in fact, he told us so, after a month's suggesting to us what we should do. We soon found we could please him much more in this way. With Ruskin, I have always noticed, a great deal depends on the association of ideas in his mind in looking at a scene in nature. A hayfield at Coniston in the early morning dew, with blue sky above, or a rock covered with beautiful moss, is to him a subject to enjoy and paint if possible. He once offered me a carriage and pair to drive, I don't know how many miles, and fifty guineas when the work was done, if I would draw a particular rock with velvety moss growing about it. In this instance I declined, but often, of course, I have been able to do what he liked, and he has been very pleased. Once in the lovely Rokeby Yorkshire country I did a sketch of Brignol Bay which delighted him, and when I arrived at the little inn (where we were staying) at about 9 o'clock, having been at work till then and having had no dinner, he insisted on my sitting down at the table, and went himself to fetch the different dishes, with what help the little shy Yorkshire maid could give, saying, 'Arthur has done a capital sketch, and must be tired and hungry, and I will wait on him.' Had I done a London subject, equally well, he wouldn't have cared a straw. He was always pleased when I painted in Switzerland or at Amiens or Venice, or in any places he loved. Great overgrown cities like London he never could endure."

END OF VOLUME XIV

Digitized by Google

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
Edinburgh & London

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

FINE ARTS LIBRARY
3 2044 032 644 734

Digitized by Google